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THE

GENERAL HISTORY

OF THE

CHRISTIAN CHURCH,

FROM HER BIRTH

TO HER

FINAL TRIUMPHANT STATE IN HEAVEN:

CHIEFLY DEDUCED

FROM THE APOCALYPSE OF ST. JOHN,

THE APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST.

THE FOURTH EDITION,

WITH A FEW ADDITIONAL REMARKS AND ELUCIDATIONS,

BY THE AUTHOR,

G. PASTORINI.

GEORGETOWN COLLEGE

Blessed is he that readeth and heareth the words of this Prophecy.

Apocalypse, c. i. v. 3.

NEW-YORK:

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NEW YORK

THE EDITOR TO THE PUBLIC.

IT is now about twenty-seven years since the General History of the Church, as illustrated chiefly from the Apocalypse, by Signior Pastorini, was first presented to the Public. It was variously received, according to the various temper and dispositions of its readers. Some did not hesitate to treat it with ridicule, as the production of a weak and visionary mind: Others attacked it by objections of different kinds, none of which seem to carry with them very considerable weight: But the generality formed a very favourable opinion of it, and read it with equal satisfaction and edification. They were not a little struck by the new light which the author seemed to have thrown on the mysteries contained, and the judgments denounced, in the prophetic book before us. Their attention was particularly excited by his open declaration, that, he apprehended, some of the seven scourges there threatened, were hastening fast to be inflicted on criminal and unrepenting nations, and a prophetic Vial was soon to be poured out on guilty heads. He charitably therefore forewarned his readers, to seek by sincere repentance to avert, if possible, the impending judgment, or, to be at

least themselves prepared; and not to fail to instruct their children by every religious lesson, to be ready to receive, in the most Christian manner, the approaching awful chastisement.

These salutary admonitions were thought by those who were personally acquainted with the author, to come from him with singular propriety and authority: and few seemed better qualified to penetrate into the secret recesses of the Apocalypse than he was. Born with great natural abilities, which had been carefully improved from his infancy by an excellent education; blessed moreover with a heart formed for piety and virtue, he dedicated himself at an early period of life to the study and practice of religion. His virtue and learning soon became conspicuous not only in the line of sacred literature, but alike in mathematical and astronomical: of this last he exhibited a proof by his elaborate and accurate publications in the years 1745—6—7, &c. (see Philosophical Transactions,) and by his concernment in the introduction of the new style in the year 1752. His sacred and theological literature acquired him the degree of doctor of divinity in the University of Paris, and his mathematical knowledge, the honour of fellowship of our own Royal Society and that of Berlin; and, yet young, he was furthermore raised to the episcopal dignity. This sacred dignity he held upwards of 40 years, during which period he *fed his flock with the bread of life and understanding*, Eccles. 15, and maintained the *Faith* and *Doctrine*

committed to his trust, sound and pure. When raised to the episcopal dignity, he then more than ever devoted himself to the study of Holy Scripture. With a mind thus improved and enriched with abundant store of knowledge, he ventured to direct his labours and reflections to clear up, in some degree, the darkest perhaps of the sacred Prophecies. He was not deterred from the undertaking, either by the difficulties and obscurities peculiar to the Apocalypse, or by the little success of others who had gone before him on a similar design. Convinced in his own mind, that most of these interpreters had failed in their attempts, because they had contracted their systems to too narrow a compass, viz. only to a few of the first ages of the Church; he takes a more enlarged and extensive view of things, and carries on the divine economy respecting the Church, from her foundation through every succeeding period to the end of time, and her final introduction into heaven. His plan appears to have been conceived with great judgment and penetration, and it has been executed with equal ability.

He lays it down as a fundamental law in the interpretation of the Apocalypse, that not a single word is superfluous, nor repeated without a particular reason. Hence, he scrutinizes every term with the nicest refinement in the original and in the most approved versions. The least variation in mode or time never escapes him. He turns his text into every point of view, in order to fix and ascertain

its true meaning. When he had digested the whole of his subject, and had worked it up with great pains and labour, though aware how it would be received by some, he ventured to send it forth to the public, little solicitous how far it would enhance or lessen his literary fame, provided it contributed in any degree to awaken a thoughtless and criminal generation to the great and awful truths and salutary terrors of religion.

Although no pains were taken by the author or his friends to circulate his work, it soon found its way into foreign countries, particularly into France and Germany. A French translation of it was published in 1778, p. 159, &c. by a Benedictin monk of the congregation of St. Maurus, a congregation so well known by its literary labours. Of this order of religious men, the author was a member in the present English congregation of Benedictins. Soon after, it was translated into Latin by an English Benedictin monk resident at Paris; into German by l'Abbé Goldhagen, 1785, 3 vols. 8vo. and lately into Italian. We may judge in what esteem the original performance was held abroad, by the following extract from the periodical writings of a very judicious and learned author, l'Abbé Feller, universally known and esteemed in France and Germany for the zeal and success with which he has for many years defended the cause and interest of religion. Dated 1786. Sept. P. 106.—" L'ouvrage de Seigneur Pastorini " est le seule bon Commentaire sur l'Apocalypse

" que l'Angleterre ait produit, et la nation doit
" scavoir bon gré à l'Auteur d'avoir contribué à
" faire oublier les extravagances que Jacques ir. et
" le célébré Newton ont debitées sur ce livre di-
" vin. C'est un scavant et edifiant ouvrage, où la
" theologie et l'histoire ecclesiastique repandent
" des lumieres precieuses sur le plus mysterieux
" des livres saints ; où les Prophetics admirables,
" realisées par des faits averés publics, eclatans, re-
" pandent dans l'ame des Chretiens l'esperance et
" le courage, en même tems qu'elles rendent un te-
" moignage solemnel à la puissance et à la verité
" de Dieu. Ce qui reste sous le voile, s'annonce
" dejà d'une maniere sensible, et le tableau des
" tems où nous vivons n'est pas celui qui brille le
" moins par les traits de caractere, par les cou-
" leurs vives et vraies."——Translated :

" The work of Signior Pastorini, is the only
" good comment which England has produced
" upon the Apocalypse. The nation has obliga-
" tions to the author for having contributed to
" cause to be forgotten the extravagant notions of
" James the first and the celebrated Newton, re-
" specting this divine book. It is a learned and
" edifying performance. The theological and ec-
" clesiastical matter interspersed throughout it,
" shed valuable lights upon the most mysterious
" of the most sacred writings. The wonderful
" prophecies contained in it being established upon
" authentic, striking, and public facts, inspire the
" Christian soul with Christian hope and fortitude,

" and afford a solemn testimony to the power and " veracity of God. What remains as yet undis- " closed, manifests itself already in a sensible man- " ner: and the times we live in furnish a faithful " and lively picture."

The first edition was soon bought up; and though a second was earnestly wished for, the author, for various reasons, declined to undertake it. The experience of nearly thirty years, the latter part of which has been so eventful, convinced him more than ever that he had not been deceived in his general view of things. To his intimate acquaintance he was often heard to repeat in the language of Moses in his celebrated canticle, *Adesse festinant Tempora: the times are fast approaching.* At length a friend of his who had known him from his earliest days, and been witness to his virtues for many years, offering his service to prepare a second edition; the author accepted his proposal, and furnished him with some additional remarks, which will be found in their proper places.

Soon after the author had favoured the editor with his additional materials, he closed a well spent life by an happy exit. His death, it may confidently be hoped, *precious in the sight of God!* and his virtues and zealous exertions in the cause of religion, will be long remembered, particularly by the members of the Roman Catholic communion in this kingdom.

INTRODUCTION.

THE book of the Apocalypse, according to that learned interpreter of the Scriptures, St. Jerome, "contains an infinite number of mysteries relating "to future times." Lib. 1. contra Jovin. "The "Apocalypse," says St. Austin, "is a prophecy "of what is to happen from the first coming of "Christ upon earth, to his second coming at the "last day." De civ. Dei. l. 2. c. 8. Some modern writers hold the same opinion. Besides these authorities, our own study of that mysterious book, diligently pursued, has entirely prevailed on us to espouse the same sentiment. The Apocalypse exhibits, in general, a summary of the whole history of the Christian Church from the date of its birth, to its triumphant and glorious state in Heaven after the close of time. This is the foundation of the present work, and we hope the attentive reader, when he has considered the whole, will approve our sentiments, and applaud our endeavours. He may, perhaps, then join us in thinking that the celebrated commentators, Bossuet and Calmet, have too much contracted this admirable prophecy, by confining the contents to so short a period as the four first centuries of the Christian æra, and applying the whole, except the two last chapters, to the persecutions which the Church suffered from the

pagan Roman emperors, and to the destruction of the Roman empire. For this reason the two abovementioned authors have often been obliged to wrest the text, and give it a forced and improbable explication, to bring it within their system. On the same account they have derogated from the dignity and precision of that prophecy, by applying several texts to the same event; whereas, whoever looks attentively into the tenour of the Apocalypse, will perceive that St. John's precision and brevity are such, that he never repeats the same thing.

For the unfolding of the different parts of the Apocalypse, we have followed, in general, the plan laid down by Mr. De la Chetardie towards the close of the last century, as it has been since improved by a late French commentator on the Scripture. It consists in a division of the whole Christian æra to the end of time, into seven *Ages*, corresponding to the seven *Seals*, seven *Trumpets*, and seven *Vials*, mentioned in the Apocalypse; so that to each belong a Seal, Trumpet, and Vial. But in the application of the prophecies contained under these seals, trumpets, and vials, as well as in other parts of the Apocalypse, we have frequently deviated from the abovenamed writers, to substitute what we thought a more genuine explication. It must then be observed, that an *age* and a century must not here be taken for synonymous terms; but by an *age* in this history we shall understand one of the seven divisions of time abovementioned: neither are these divisions of time equal.

From the preceding observations, it follows that Christ divides the history of his Church into seven periods, in each of which he describes three different sorts of transactions under the respective seal, trumpet, and vial. The *Lamb* holds a book sealed with seven seals, which he opens one after another. This book contains the history of the formation and propagation of Christ's Church, together with the opposition made to the establishment of it; and a part of this account is disclosed at the opening of each seal. To every seal corresponds a trumpet, which is sounded by an Angel. The sound of a trumpet naturally indicates an alarm; and such is the nature of the trumpets in the Apocalypse. They always announce events that are alarming to the Church, such as persecutions, intestine convulsions occasioned by heresies, &c. After the trumpets follow the vials of the wrath of God. These convey the punishments which Christ inflicts on the enemies of his people. Hence it appears that the seals, trumpets, and vials, unfold the three kinds of events which distinguish each age of the Christian Church.—One may remark in the history of the Jews, that nearly the same sort of economy was observed in the divine dispensations towards that people. They were favoured with the special assistance of God, but they had also their trials, their persecutions, &c. and at other times they saw their enemies laid prostrate by the divine hand before them.

When almighty God thinks fit to reveal future

events, he generally expresses them in obscure terms, that leave the meaning more or less uncertain. This seems to be done in order to prevent the daring presumption of some men, who might attempt, if the prophecies were clear, to obstruct and hinder their accomplishment. Others of mankind of a more timorous disposition, would be alarmed and over-much terrified at disasters which they foresaw were impending upon them. On another hand, if futurity was clearly foretold, it might seem to intrench upon that liberty, which God has been pleased to grant to man, of directing his own conduct and actions. For these reasons the generality of prophecies are covered with a veil of darkness and uncertainty. Obscurity is therefore a general characteristic of prophecy, but it is peculiarly so of the Apocalypse, as every commentator has acknowledged. This book appears at first sight impenetrable. Let any one dip into it without having a key to open to him the meaning, and he will see nothing but a continued series of the most mysterious enigmas. Hence it has happened that so many different explanations have been invented. But the same obscurity was the occasion that the ancient fathers were so sparing in their interpretations of this prophecy. They have here and there explained a particular passage, without attempting the whole, and sometimes only given a moral exposition of it. But in this we need not wonder, because as the Apocalypse is the history of Christ's Church through the whole time of its

existence, so few events had happened when they wrote, that the greatest part of the book must have appeared to them inexplicable. Hence we see the advantage of the present times for unravelling the mysteries of the Apocalypse, when so considerable a share of them has been fulfilled. Whoever looks back into the history of the Church, and compares attentively the facts with the expressions of St. John, will see a distinct analogy and connexion between them. It must however be allowed, there remain yet very many obscurities, which, if we have not always sufficiently cleared, we hope the indulgent reader will consider the difficulty and excuse the defect.

The principal help for removing the obscurities of the Apocalypse, arises from a right understanding of its general tendency. If a wrong system be adopted, the difficulty of reconciling the different parts of the prophecy becomes insuperable: and this has appeared fully in the attempts of several interpreters. But, when the plan of the book is discovered and ascertained, the difficulties decrease, and the obscurities gradually disappear. Thus a surprising light breaks in upon the Apocalypse, when we view it as the history of Christ's Church divided into seven periods or ages, as we have above explained. A second means of removing difficulties is, the taking notice of the order of the different parts that compose this prophetic book. St. John gives all the Seals together, then all the Trumpets, and lastly the Vials in the same manner.

Under the seven seals a series of transactions is related, which belong to the seven successive ages of the Church, and which terminate with the great day of judgment. The same course is observed in the trumpets and the Vials. But we must however remark, that, after finishing with the trumpets, he does not proceed immediately to the vials: nevertheless he observes the same rule, namely, in returning, after the seventh trumpet, to relate a new series of events; but which are confined to the first, third, sixth, and seventh ages; these ages being the most interesting to the Church, as the three first of them exhibit the history of idolatry, and the last or seventh relates to the general judgment. This narrative is given in the chapters xii. xiii. xiv.; and as it is joined to that of the trumpets, it partakes of the nature of them, that is, it describes events that are alarming to the Church, with the addition however of some incidents or promises that administer comfort in those alarming circumstances.

The prophet having thus carried us on to the end of time, begins again with the first age, and rehearses under the seven vials, in chap. xv. xvi. a new course of transactions that runs through all the seven ages. This narrative being terminated, he returns back, as he had done after the account of the trumpets, to a new course of history, relating to the first, third, sixth, and seventh ages, beginning at chap. xvii. and ending with verse 10th of chap. xix. This piece of history is of such a nature as

agrees with that of the vials to which it is joined, that is, it is a rehearsal of divine punishments; to which are annexed exultations on these victories of Christ over his enemies. This being done, the prophet, according to his custom, begins again a new narrative of events, of the same nature as the preceding, and which also belong to those interesting ages, the first, third, sixth, and seventh. This narrative begins at verse 11th of chap. xix. and continues to the end of chap. xx. Finally, the two last chapters conclude the prophecy with an account of the other world, as it will be after the close of all time.——Hence then appears the order observed in this incomparable prophecy of the Apocalypse. As the whole history of the Church therein contained, is divided into seven ages, so it is related, not indeed all that part together which belongs to each age, but in seven different series of events, six of which reach from the first age to the last day, and the seventh is the description of the next world. The first of these series is given under the seals; the second under the trumpets; the third in the chapters xii. xiii. xiv.; the fourth under the vials; the fifth in chapters xvii. xviii. and part of chapter xix.; the sixth in the rest of chapter xix. and in chapter xx.; and the seventh in chapters xxi. and xxii. This sevenfold division is conformable to the constant use made in the Apocalypse of that mysterious number *seven*, as, of seven seals, seven trumpets, seven vials, seven Churches, seven candlesticks, seven spirits, &c.

It is plain from this disposition of the plan of the Apocalypse, that it is necessary to transpose many things in order to form a regular narration: for, as St. John so often travels through the whole period of the Christian æra, at each time relating only a part of the transactions, we are obliged to collect from different parts of the book all those facts that belong to the same age. And we may observe, that the prophet is the most copious upon four of the seven ages, viz. the first, third, sixth, and seventh, as being the most interesting to the Church, and most remarkable for their transactions.

Another help which we found for clearing up obscurities was, a very strict attention to the tenour of the text. The extraordinary nicety in the expressions, the sudden change of tense in the verbs, of number in the nouns, general words used in particular senses, the addition or omission of a word, with several other such circumstances, are of great consequence for discovering the true tense, and have not been by the generality of interpreters sufficiently attended to; which indeed we may not wonder at, as such minute particularities are not generally expected, and there never has been seen a book written with that comprehensive precision and exact nicety which are observable in the Apocalypse.

In composing this work we have freely made use of other authors, where we liked their opinions; and we hope to incur no censure, when on other occasions we have substituted our own. Some few

passages of the Apocalypse have been generally understood in the same sense by all the ancient fathers of the Church and modern catholic interpreters: to these we have scrupulously adhered, and founded our interpretation on their testimony. In other places, where former writers took the liberty of interpreting, and differed in their expositions, we have likewise thought it lawful to use the same liberty. We hope for indulgence, if in some few instances we appear to have applied the texts of the ancient prophets to what they have not usually been applied. This freedom, we presume, is allowable, when the sense of the texts has never been fully settled. And here we cannot but remark that, whoever will take the pains to study the Apocalypse, we apprehend he will perceive that it throws a new light upon several dark passages of the ancient prophets. Besides, it must be observed, that a prophecy is not always confined to one object, but often relates both to the figure of a thing and to the thing itself, and consequently has two accomplishments, the one inadequate and in part only, the other complete and perfect. How often, for example, is the same scriptural text applied in an imperfect sense to David or Solomon, which is fully completed in Christ, of whom they were figures? Thus also the return of the Jews from the Babylonic captivity may be deemed a figure of their return from a much longer captivity in the latter period of the world, and both may be intimated together by the prophets. And so of other instances. On these

grounds a text, that has been generally applied to the figure, we have sometimes transferred to the thing itself, to show its full and ultimate completion. That part of the Apocalypse, which gives the prophetic history of past ages, we have illustrated with the real history of those times, that the accomplishment may clearly appear. If we have not always mentioned our vouchers, it is because we thought it unnecessary in the case of such short abstracts of history, especially as they are taken from the well known ecclesiastic historians of the times. In regard to the text of the Apocalypse, we have made use of the commonly known English translation made from the Latin Vulgate; at the same time taking notice of any difference, worth observing, between the translation and the original Greek. In fine, we here make our acknowledgments to those friends whom we have consulted, and who have assisted us in discovering and unfolding the mysterious senses of the Apocalypse.

As to the time when this prophecy was delivered to St. John, it is generally understood to have been in the year 95 or 96 of the Christian æra. This holy apostle, after being immersed in a caldron of boiling oil at Rome, from which he came out unhurt, was banished by the emperor Domitian into the Isle of Patmos, in the Egean Sea or Archipelago, where, as we learn from himself, Apoc. i. 9, he was favoured with this most admirable and most comprehensive of all prophecies. "St. John was "a prophet," says St. Jerome, "because being in

" the Isle of Patmos, whither he had been exiled " for the faith by the emperor Domitian, he re- " ceived the Apocalypse, or a Revelation contain- " ing an infinite number of mysteries appertaining " to future times." Lib. 1. contra Jovinian. He always enjoyed a superior share in the affection of his divine master, and among many proofs of it he was indulged with this singular and extraordinary favour, not granted to any of the other apostles. This most instructive book we cannot but earnestly recommend to every Christian, and we hope our recommendation will have the more weight, as it is grounded on the words of the divine book itself: *Blessed is he that readeth and heareth the words of this prophecy: and keepeth those things which are written in it*, Apoc. i. 3. The obscurity which covers the Apocalypse has been the occasion of its having been so little attended to. We have therefore attempted to remove that obstacle: But if we have not totally succeeded, we plead indulgence from the difficulty of explaining a prophecy so sublime, and the most mysterious that is extant. Besides the advantage resulting from a general survey of the history of the Church, another motive for attending to the Apocalypse, is the particular interest every Christian must take in that part of the history which relates to the present time, and to those scenes which are approaching. Much instruction may be drawn from the present state of the Church as described by our prophetic writer, and caution ought to be the result, for what we find is to happen

shining objects in nature, that the whole surpasses greatly, whatever human conception is capable of imagining or combining together. Such then being the extent, the usefulness, and the excellence of the prophecy delivered in the Apocalypse, what can be more curious or interesting than a history founded upon it, which is what we offer to the Christian reader?

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WILLIAM MULLEN, HIS BOOK.

THE GENERAL HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH,

DIVIDED INTO SEVEN AGES,

AND DEDUCED CHIEFLY FROM THE APOCALYPSE.

BEFORE we enter upon this prophetic history, it will be necessary to explain the first chapter of the Apocalypse, as it contains the preface to the whole book, and, on that account, is essential to the present work.

CHAPTER I.

Explication of the first Chapter of the Apocalypse.

Apoc. Chap. I. verse 1. *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to make known to his servants the things which must shortly come to pass: and signified, sending by his angel to his servant John.*

V. 2. *Who hath given testimony to the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, what things soever he hath seen.*

We are here informed that the book of the Apocalypse is a *Revelation*, which Jesus Christ, as Man-God, received from God: the purpose of which is, to disclose to *his servants*, the christians, a series of events very interesting to them, and *which must shortly come to pass*. This revelation Jesus Christ communicates by the channel of *his angel*, whom he *sends* to deliver it to *his servant John*. The character here given to this *servant John* shows him to be the Apostle St. John; for he is here said to *have given testimony to the word of*

God, by his preaching and suffering for the cause of God, and to have also *given testimony of Jesus Christ*, by bearing witness to *what things soever he had seen* of his divine Master. And this account of him coincides with what St. John says of himself at the beginning of his first epistle: *That which we have heard*, says he, *which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life ——we declare unto you.*

We have said that it was Christ who *signified* or notified this his Revelation, *sending* it *by his angel;* which is confirmed by what he himself speaks in the conclusion of the Apocalypse: *I Jesus have sent my angel, to testify to you these things in the churches*, Apoc. xxii. 16. But it might be equally said, that God himself communicated this prophecy by his angel; for we likewise read: *The Lord God of the spirits of the prophets sent his angel to shew his servants the things which must be done shortly*, Apoc. xxii. 6. which words are quite similar to those above of verse the first. However, it is not material whether to God, or to Jesus Christ, the communication of the prophecy be ascribed, when we consider the divinity of Christ.

Another observation we must here make, is concerning the *angel* of God or Christ, who is sent to communicate the Apocalypse to St. John. He is generally supposed to be a real angel; but upon close examination we think he will appear to be St. John the Baptist. This personage is peculiarly vested with the character of angel* or messenger of God and Christ, and is denominated such in the ancient prophecies, and by Christ himself: *Behold. I send my angel*, said the Lord by his prophet Malachy, *and he shall prepare the way before my face*, Mal. iii. 1. which Christ applies to his precursor St. John Baptist. *This is he*, says Christ, *of whom it is written: Behold, I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare the way before thee*, Matt. xi. 10. The same is also confirmed by the Baptist's own declaration: *I am*, says he, *the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord*, John i. 23.

* The word *angel* signifies *messenger*.

which plainly speaks his function of *angel* or messenger of Christ. A further proof is derived from the words of the angel himself, who thus speaks to St. John the Apostle: *I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren who have the testimony of Jesus*, Apoc. xix. 10. And again, *I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them that keep the words of the prophecy of this book*, Apoc. xxii. 9. This language, it is clear, cannot be that of a real angel, but corresponds very justly with the character of the Baptist, who had been a *fellow-servant* of the Apostle and his brethren in giving *testimony* to Jesus, &c. A function suitable to the character of St. John the Baptist; who, as he announced Christ, and showed him present to the people; so here, he announceth and showeth to St. John the Apostle the History of Christ, or of his Church. However, as the Apostle gives to St. John Baptist the name of angel, perhaps his form and appearance were such on this occasion.

V. 3. *Blessed is he that readeth and heareth* the words of this prophecy: and keepeth those things which are written in it: for the time is at hand.* We are here assured that great is the advantage of attending to what is delivered in the Apocalypse; for they are pronounced *blessed*, who *read* or *hear* read the *words of this prophecy*, and *who keep the things which are written in it*, that is, who take due notice of *the things which are written in it*, in order to compare them with what is already fulfilled by real events, to beware of what is foretold to come, and to draw proper instructions from both. These prophecies are the more interesting, as *the time is at hand* for the accomplishment of some of them, and the rest will follow in their order. This was true at the period when St. John wrote, and will be equally true at whatever period of time the Apocalypse be consulted, as some part of its prophetic history will always be near the time of its accomplishment. It might likewise be said, that the whole would happen soon, with allusion to the shortness of all time when compared with the eternal

* In the Greek text, *and those that hear*, &c.

existence of God, according to that of St. Peter. *One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*, 2 Pet. iii. 8. and that of the Psalmist: *A thousand years in thy sight, are but as yesterday, which is past and gone*, Psalm lxxxix. 4.

V. 4. *John to the seven Churches which are in Asia, Grace be unto you, and peace from Him that is, and that was, and that is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne.*

St. John addresses the seven Churches of Lesser Asia, which he governed, and which will be specified below, ver. 11. We shall see him there receive an order to send them this prophecy. He salutes these churches, wishing them *grace*, or benediction and *peace* from *Him who is, and who was, and who is to come*, that is, from Almighty God, who exists from all eternity, continues to exist, will remain for all eternity, and will come at the last day to reward his faithful servants, and to punish the wicked. The Apostle offers the same good wishes from the *seven Spirits which are before the throne* of God, always ready to depart and execute his commands with respect to mankind. These are *ministering spirits, sent to minister for them, who shall receive the inheritance of salvation*, Hebr. i. 14.

V. 5. *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first-begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth: who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.*

V. 6. *And hath made us a kingdom* and priests to God and his father: to him be glory and empire for ever and ever. Amen.*

St John continues his salutation to the seven churches, wishing them *grace and peace* from Jesus Christ, whom he entitles the *faithful witness*, as having given testimony to his eternal father upon earth, and executed faithfully the commission he had received from him. He is also *the first begotten of the dead*, having raised himself from death to life by his own power, which no man ever did or can do, nor can any man rise

* In the Greek text, *made us kings.*

again but by virtue of the resurrection of Christ, according to that of St. Paul: *By a man came death, and by a man the resurrection of the dead. And as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive*, 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. Jesus Christ is likewise styled *the prince of the kings of the earth*, not only as God, but likewise as God-Man, having acquired by the merits of his Incarnation, a sovereign power on earth. On that account, *all power is given to me*, says Christ, *in heaven and in earth*, Matt. xxviii. 18. And again, *The father hath given to the son power to do judgment.* Why so? *Because he is the son of man*, John v. 27. Here we see ascertained the universal dominion of Christ. Then follow the gracious effects of his bounty towards mankind; for, *he hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood:* and he *hath made us kings and priests to God and his Father*, that is, he hath made us his co-heirs, and has admitted us to a participation of his own sovereign power over the world. and likewise of his priesthood, by virtue of which we become also *a holy priesthood*, as St. Peter says, *to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. ii. 5. This communication of power granted by Christ to his servants, by which they become *kings* and *priests*, will chiefly take place in the other world; and it is not only founded on the present text, but is clear from our Saviour's own words: *I dispose to you*, says he, *as my Father has disposed to me, a kingdom: that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and may sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel*, Luke xxii. 29, 30. And again, *To him that shall overcome, I will give to sit with me in my throne*, Apoc. iii. 21. To Christ, therefore, our bountiful Saviour and gracious Benefactor, *be glory and empire for ever and ever. Amen.*

V. 7. *Behold, he cometh with the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him. And all the tribes of the earth shall bewail themselves because of him. Even so. Amen.*

The same Jesus Christ, who is *prince of the kings of the earth*, who *has washed us from our sins in his blood*, who has chosen us and *made us kings and priests to God*,

is equally entitled to be our Judge, and will effectually come in his sovereign power at the last day to judge the world: at which time *every eye shall see him;* and his countenance will be terrible to those who *pierced him*, and crucified him. And even *all the tribes of the earth*, or the people of all nations upon the face of the earth, will mourn and *bewail* his death, being amazed and confounded at the unparalleled impiety of those men who crucified him. In the two preceding verses were described the functions, which Jesus Christ, the son of God made man, performed upon earth, in fulfilling the charge he had received from his Father, in redeeming the world, &c. These functions we see here completed by his coming at the last day to judge mankind, and to decree their rewards and punishments

V. 8. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, saith the Lord God, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.*

Here the Almighty himself speaks: *I am Alpha and Omega;* Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the *Greek* alphabet, the meaning of which in this place is explained by the subsequent words, *the beginning and the end.* I am, says Almighty God, the beginning and end of every thing. I am the first cause, and last end, of all beings. I am the source from which every thing flows, and to which every thing must return. I created the world by my power, I govern it by my wisdom, and shall put an end to it at my pleasure. I am He *who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.* See above, ver. 4.

Thus we see the two great Personages, who here preside through the whole scene of the Apocalypse, God and Jesus Christ. They are placed in the supreme degree of eminence, and are clearly distinguished by their respective titles and attributes. They are exhibited as the Sovereign Rulers of the Universe, the Moderators of all human transactions. And thus is nobly ushered in the Prophetic History, which begins as follows:

V. 9. *I John your brother and your partner in tribula-*

tion, and in the kingdom, and patience in Christ Jesus, was in the island, which is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus.

V. 10. *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,*

V. 11. *Saying, what thou seest, write in a book: and send to the seven Churches which are in Asia, to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamus, and to Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.*

St. John here informs us, that he had shared in the persecution and *tribulations*, which were common to the christians; that he was *partner* with them in being a member with them of the body of christians, which formed the kingdom of Jesus Christ. By the orders of the Emperor Domitian, St John, as we have seen, was put into a chaldron of boiling oil at Rome, which he bore with invincible *patience*, and came out unhurt; after which he was banished into the *island of Patmos*, in the Archipelago There he was an exile *for the word of God*, for having preached *the word of God* in opposition to the superstitions of idolatry, and *for the testimony of Jesus*, or for having borne testimony to Christ, by confessing publicly his holy name, and maintaining his doctrine. He was there ravished *in Spirit on the Lord's day*, or Sunday, which being sanctified by the great mysteries of the resurrection of Christ and the descent of the Holy Ghost, was certainly a proper day for receiving this important Revelation, which comprises the whole history of the Christian Church from her birth to her final triumphant state in heaven.

He then proceeds to describe the manner in which this History was communicated to him: *And I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, what thou seest, write in a book.* We proved, ver. i. p. 2. that this Prophecy was delivered to the Apostle by the angel of Christ, St. John Baptist: and He is *the great voice* like that *of a trumpet*, which here speaks to the Apostle; for the function of the voice on this occasion is similar to that which the Baptist performed when on earth. He then announced as with the voice of a trumpet, the coming of his Divine Master: *I am the voice*,

says he, *of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord*, John i. 23. In like manner he is here distinguished by the appellation of a *great voice*, and announces what is and what will be his Master's government and administration of his Church. Besides, we read in verse the first of chap. iv. of the Apocalypse: *The first voice which I heard, as it were, of a trumpet speaking with me, said: Come up hither, and I will shew thee the things which must be done hereafter;* which being compared to verse the eighth of chap. xxii. *After I had heard and seen. I fell down to adore before the feet of the angel, who shewed me these things;* it plainly appears that the *voice* and the *angel* indicate the same person, *viz.* St. John Baptist. This observation premised, the Apostle is told: *What thou seest, write in a book, and send to the seven Churches, which are in Asia,* &c. He is ordered to send this book of the Apocalypse to the seven Asiatic Churches mentioned in the text, whence it was circulated over the christian world, and transmitted down to us.

V. 12. *And I turned*, continues St. John, *to see the voice that spoke with me: and being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks.*

V. 13. *And in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks one like to the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the feet, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.*

V. 14. *And his head and his hairs were white, as white wool, and as snow: and his eyes were as a flame of fire.*

V. 15. *And his feet like unto fine brass, as in a burning furnace: and his voice, as the sound of many waters.*

V. 16. *And he had in his right hand seven stars. And from his mouth came out a sharp two-edged sword: and his face was as the sun shineth in his power.*

St. John, in looking behind him *to see the voice that spoke* to him, is surprised by the appearance of a remarkable scene: *Seven golden candlesticks* standing, and in the midst of them a Person resembling the *Son of man*, or Christ, *clothed with a* long *garment down to the feet, and girt about the breast with a golden girdle*, a dress that denotes high rank and dignity; and being *girt* in this manner shows him to be about business,

namely, the government of his Church. *His head and hair were white, as white wool, and as snow;* an emblem of Christ's divine existence from all eternity, whiteness of hair naturally indicating old age. And *his eyes were as a flame of fire,* as piercing as the *flame of fire,* penetrating into every thing, as he himself says: *I am he, that searcheth the reins and hearts,* Apoc. ii. 23. *His feet were like unto fine brass, as in a burning furnace;* the feet make the extremity of the body, and appear here enflamed as brass in a glowing furnace, to show that at the extremity or end of time, Christ will come to destroy the world by fire. *His voice was as the sound of many waters;* his *voice* sounded like the noise of *many* flowing *waters,* as terrible as the roaring of a tempestuous sea. Such will be his voice in denouncing sentence against the wicked at the last day. *In his right hand* he held *seven stars,* which will be explained below, ver. 20. And *from his mouth came out a sharp two edged sword,* the terrible weapon which Christ will use, as we shall see hereafter, to slay Antichrist and his armies. It appears to proceed *from his mouth,* as ready to execute his command. It also shows in general, that Christ punishes his enemies. Lastly, *his face* shone as bright as when *the sun shineth in its* full *power;* this is the bright pleasing countenance which he will show to his Saints at the last day.

Thus appears the *Son of man,* arrayed in dignity, with the marks of his unlimited power and dominion, with the symbols of his divine and human attributes, and as the Sovereign Administrator of his Church.

V. 17. *And when I had seen him,* continues St. John, *I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying: Fear not, I am the first and the last.*

V. 18. *And alive*, and was dead. And behold I am living for ever and ever, and have the keys of death and of hell.*

St. John, struck at the awful appearance of his Lord, *falls* down *at his feet as dead;* but is raised up by Christ, who tells him, *not to fear,* and adds, *I am the first and*

* In the Greek text, *the Living one.*

the last; I exist before all created beings, and shall continue to exist when time shall be no more; I am from all eternity, and shall be to all eternity. I am *alive, and was dead:* I am the *living one;* life is essential to me, as God; but I *died,* as Man-God; *and behold I am now living for ever and ever.* I hold *the keys of Death and of Hell;* mine is the power of opening the graves, and raising the *dead* bodies; mine is the power of opening *Hell,* and drawing thence the souls, to reunite them to their bodies: And thus I am He that shall resuscitate all mankind, and shall be their Judge.

V. 19. *Write therefore the things which thou hast seen, and which are, and which must be done hereafter.*

Our Saviour here orders St. John to *write* the scene he has already *seen,* and the things *which are,* or which have just now been dictated to him; and to write also the things *which must be done hereafter,* that is, the History, that will presently be given him, of the events which will happen in the Christian Church.

V. 20. *The mystery of the seven stars,* continues our Saviour, *which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches.*

G.T.C.

Here Christ his self explains to St. John the *mystery* or meaning of two particulars: *The seven stars, which thou sawest in my right hand, are,* or denote *the angels of the seven churches* in Asia, that is, the Bishops of those Churches: And the *seven candlesticks are,* or represent those *seven Churches.* Let us also observe, that these seven candlesticks, or seven Churches, may very well represent all the Churches of the christian world; and in that case, our Saviour, who is placed in the midst of them, is naturally exhibited as administering and governing the whole.

CHAP. II.

The History of the first Age of the Christian Church.

CHRIST proceeds, in the second and third chapters of the Apocalypse, to dictate to St. John particular instructions for each of the seven abovementioned Churches; which, as they do not belong to the general history of Christianity, we shall pass over, and shall now proceed to the fourth and fifth chapters, which open a general magnificent scene, that prepares us for the particular transactions.

Prelude to the opening of the seven Seals.

Apoc. Chap. IV. v. 1. *After these things I looked,* says St. John, *and behold a door was opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard, as it were, of a trumpet speaking with me, said: Come up hither, and I will shew thee the things which must be done hereafter.*

V. 2. *And immediately I was in the spirit: and behold there was a throne set in heaven, and upon the throne one sitting.*

V. 3. *And he that sat, was to the sight like the Jasper and the Sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.*

No sooner had St. John received, in the preceding vision, the documents he was to transmit to the seven Asiatic Churches; when behold! a new scene displays itself. Heaven *opens.* St. John is invited up thither by the *voice* which had spoken to him before, that is, by St. John Baptist, and is told he shall see what is to happen in future ages. On a sudden appears a *Throne,* and the Almighty himself *seated* upon it, shining in the brightest lustre of *Jasper* green and *Sardine* red: The green colour, as best proportioned to the human eye, speaks his Mercy, and the red his Justice; these two attributes bearing a particular relation to mankind. The throne is surrounded with a *Rainbow,* in which

shines remarkably a most beautiful green, like that of *emeralds*. This Rainbow, with its bright green colour, denotes the Covenant of reconciliation and peace, which God made with man after the deluge.

V. 4. *And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats, four and twenty Ancients sitting, clothed in white garments, and on their heads crowns of gold.*

Round the Throne of God appear sitting *four and twenty Ancients*, representing the Saints that preceded the age of christianity, and for that reason called *Ancients*. They are clothed in *white*, to express the immortal glory they possess in heaven; and their *crowns of gold* show their royal dignity; God admitting them to sit as judges with him. In the same manner it was said, that Christ makes his saints *kings*, Apoc. i. 6.— See p. 4.

V. 5. *And from the throne proceeded lightnings, and voices, and thunders: and there were seven lamps burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.*

The *lightnings*, loud *voices*, and *thunders*, which come from the *throne* of God, announce alarms and severe hardships, such as persecutions dissentions, calamities, &c. by which he tries the fidelity of his servants on earth. And the *seven Spirits of God*, who appear under the form of *burning lamps*, are seven angels, as before-mentioned, Apoc. 1. 4. standing ready to execute the Divine commands.

V. 6. *And in the sight of the throne was as it were a sea of glass like to Crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes before and behind.*

V. 7. *And the first living creature was like a lion; and the second living creature like a calf: and the third living creature having the face, as it were, of a man: and the fourth living creature was like an eagle flying.*

V: 8. *And the four living creatures had each of them six wings; and round about*, and within, they are full of eyes.*

* In the Greek, *six wings about him; and within*, &c.

The extensive *sea of glass* here described, transparent as *Crystal*, represents what may be called the floor of heaven. Before the throne of God and round it stand *four living creatures* of an extraordinary shape, which denote the four great prophets, Isaiah, Jeremy, Ezekiel, and Daniel. Their bodies are described *full of eyes* both *before and behind*, an emblem of their prophetic sight, that penetrates into all ages, past, present, and to come. And they being also full of eyes *within*, indicates that their extensive knowledge arises from an interior Divine Inspiration. They have each *six wings*, in the same manner as the Seraphims appeared to the prophet Isaiah, Isai. vi. 2. Two wings serve to cover their face, two their feet, out of respect for the Deity; and the two others serve to fly, that is, figuratively express their expeditious readines to carry and deliver the Divine instructions and messages.

Some have imagined these *four* symbolical *living creatures* to represent the four Evangelists, but we think, improperly; as St. John was still living, and there present in person. Besides, the scene exhibited here to St. John represents the times and persons that existed before the age of Christianity. The *first living creature* is here said to resemble a *lion*, the king of beasts; because the prophet Isaiah, represented by it, was descended of the royal race of David. The *second living creature* resembles a *calf*, and represents the prophet Jeremy, in his character of a priest; the calf, which was the principal victim in Jewish sacrifices, being on that account the emblem of priesthood. The *third living creature*, exhibiting Ezekiel, has the *countenance of a man;* because God, in speaking to that prophet, always addresses him by the name of *son of man*. The *fourth living creature*, denoting Daniel, resembles a *flying eagle*, on account of the sublime oracles of this prophet, who soars to the highest object, and views the succession of all the great Empires that were to rise up in the world to the end of time. Probably these four principal prophets are to be understood to represent all the prophets of the old law.

V. 8. *And they*, the four living creatures, *rested not*

day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and who is, and who is to come.

V. 9. *And when those living creatures gave* glory and honour, and benediction to him, that sitteth on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,*

V. 10. *The four and twenty ancients fell down before him that sitteth on the throne, and adored him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:*

V. 11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory, and honour, and power: because thou hast created all things, and for thy will they were†, and have been created.*

The Almighty being seated on his throne, in the splendor of his majesty, with the marks of his supreme power, surrounded with the august choir of the ancient Saints and Prophets; these Prophets, represented by the *four living creatures*, are constantly employed in offering their homage to him and singing his praises. They cry out *day and night, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*, &c. repeating three times *Holy*, probably in honour of the Blessed Trinity; and for the same reason they give to God three different kinds of praise, *glory, honour*, and *benediction*, or thanksgiving. And whenever the *four living creatures* sing these praises, *the four and twenty Ancients* are ready to join their homage, by *falling down before Him that sitteth on the throne, and adoring Him that liveth for ever and ever;* and in token of their acknowledging all their happiness and pre-eminence to be his gift, they *cast down their crowns before the throne;* and thus they conclude their homage: *Thou art worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory, honour, and power: because thou hast created all things, and for thy will they are, and have been created;* that is, we acknowledge thy *power*, O Lord, because by thy Omnipotence *thou hast created all things; honour* is due to thee, because by *thy will* they *are*, or continue

* In the Greek, *shall give*, &c.—*the four and twenty ancients will fall down*, &c.

† In the Greek, *they are*.

to exist; *glory* is due to thee, because they *were created* to serve to thy glory.

Apoc. Chap. V. v. 1. *And I saw*, says St. John, *in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, a book written within and without, sealed with seven seals.*

The *Book*, which Almighty God holds *in his right hand*, contains the detail of his administration of the Christian Church; the length of which detail is marked by the book being written both *within* and *without*. It is *sealed up*, as containing the Divine Counsels impenetrable to human sagacity; and the *seven seals* indicate that the whole is divided into seven parts, each of which is unfolded and made known at the opening of each respective seal.

V. 2. *And I saw a strong angel, proclaiming with a loud voice: who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?*

V. 3. *And no man was able, neither in heaven, nor on earth, nor under the earth, to open the book, nor to look on it.*

A *strong angel* cries with a *loud voice*, to be heard over the whole creation, *Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?* But there is not found a creature, either in *heaven*, or *on earth*, or elsewhere, worthy to do this function, or even *to look on the book*, the eyes not being here permitted to view the repository of the Divine dispensations, which, the book being yet sealed up, are kept concealed from human understanding.

V. 4. *And I wept much*, continued St. John, *because no man was found worthy to open the book,** *nor to see it.*

V. 5. *And one of the Ancients said to me, Weep not; because the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.*

St. John, mortified and *weeping*, because no one was found worthy to open the book, is told by *one* of the four and twenty *Ancients* to cease weeping; for that *the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to*

* The Greek text here adds, *and to read it.*

open the book, &c. Christ the Messiah, who is born of the *tribe of Juda*, and who is *the root* that springs from the royal race of *David*, is, on account of his achievements, styled the *Lion* of that tribe, conformably to Jacob's prophecy: *Judah is a lion's whelp*, Gen. xlix. 9. He, the Messiah, David's descendant, like a valiant *Lion*, conquered Satan, Death, and the World. He put a stop to Satan's power, by breaking down the empire of idolatry; he discharged the great functions he undertook to perform on earth; he reconciled man to his Eternal Father; he raised himself from Death; he established his new law, notwithstanding the most obstinate opposition from the World; and he founded his Church at the expense of his blood. By these victories he is here proclaimed to have merited *to open the book*, that contains the account of the Divine dispensations to that Church.——Accordingly,

V. 6. *And I saw*, says St. John: *and behold in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the ancients, a Lamb standing as it were slain, having seven horns and seven eyes; which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth.*

V. 7. *And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat on the throne.*

We had just now seen Christ represented as a strong and valiant Lion subduing his enemies; here we see him in the humble character of *a Lamb*, which appears *as it were slain*, that is, newly sacrificed and immolated for the redemption of the world. But the Lamb is *standing*, that is, though he has been slain, he is resuscitated to life, and recovered all his strength and vigour: And he is seen placed *in the midst of the throne*, which bespeaks his divine origin and person. This Lamb has *seven horns*, signifying the seven particular different Powers which he exercises in the seven successive ages of the Christian Church: And to show his wisdom and vigilance, he has also *seven eyes*, denoting *the seven Spirits of God* above mentioned, Apoc. 1. 4. & iv. 5. or angels, who are always ready to execute the commands of God and the Lamb, and to carry their messages over the whole earth. The number *seven* here used, cor-

responds to the seven periods or ages, into which the whole duration of the Christian Church is divided: So that when it is said, that *the Lamb has seven horns and seven eyes*, it is meant, that the *Lamb*, or Jesus Christ, governs his Church through its seven successive ages, by his power and his wisdom, and by the ministry of seven angels, who may be supposed to be appointed over the seven ages of the Christian Church, each angel to each age.

The Lamb goes and *takes the book* from the hand of God, *who sitteth upon the throne:*

V. 8. *And when he had opened the book*, the four living creatures, and the four and twenty ancients fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints:*

V. 9. *And they sung a new canticle, saying: Thou art worthy, O Lord, to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: because thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God in thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.*

V. 10. *And hast made us to our God a kingdom†, and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.*

The *Lamb* having taken the book, *the four living creatures and the four and twenty ancients*, or the Prophets and the Saints prior to Christianity, whom they represent, *fall down* and adore him, having in their hands *harps* and *golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints.* The prayers *of the saints*, that is, of the Faithful on earth, are here described as sweet *odours*, and are presented to Christ by the Saints in Heaven. Then the four living creatures and the four and twenty ancients, being prostrate before the Lamb, *sing a new canticle; new*, because the subject of it is new, *viz.* the actions of the Lamb. This new canticle is, *Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; because thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us,*

* In the Greek text, *when he had taken the book*, and so read most of the ancient interpreters.

† In the Greek, *kings*.

not only us, but also our posterity, the Christian race; for thou hast redeemed us, *out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.* Thus these Saints and Prophets acknowledge, that the *Lamb* has, at the expense of his blood, redeemed mankind, and restored them to the rights they had lost by Adam's sin, and consequently, that he is *entitled* to an absolute dominion over them through all succeeding generations. Thus they also acknowledge, that they are indebted to him for the ineffable blessings of heavenly glory, and of *kingly* and *priestly* power, which *they now themselves* possess, and which will hereafter be likewise the portion of their posterity. On these accounts they proclaim, the Lamb has merited *to take the book, and to open the seals thereof,* that is, to reveal to men what relates to his Church.——Thus we see the double character of Christ. What he is here declared to have merited, as the slaughtered *Lamb;* he was also before *entitled* to in quality of the conquering *Lion.*

V. 11. *And I beheld,* proceeds St. John, *and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures and the ancients: and the number of them was thousands of thousands,*

V. 12. *Saying with a loud voice: The Lamb that was slain, is worthy to receive power, and divinity*, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and benediction.*

After the adoration and homage paid to the Lamb by the ancient prophets and saints, St John now sees an infinite multitude of *Angels* round the throne, and round the celestial choir, who come next to address the *Lamb* with their praises and loud applauses, saying, *The Lamb that was slain, is worthy to receive power, and riches,* &c. because by being *slain,* he has purchased a *power* of forming to himself a people out of every nation of the earth, that is, of founding a new universal Church, and has also merited to be vested with the government of it through all succeeding time. And as the period of the Christian Church's duration is, by Di-

* In the Greek text, *riches.* The manuscripts and the ancient writers read the same.

vine appointment, divided into seven ages, so the *Lamb* is represented as *entitled* to seven special qualities, *power*, *riches*, *wisdom*, *strength*, *honour*, *glory*, and *benediction*, which bear a relation to that part of his government of the Church, which is described under the seven *seals*. These seven qualities are therefore to be applied to the seven successive ages, each to each respectively; and there the meaning of them will be explained

V. 13. *And every creature, which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them: I heard all saying; To him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, benediction, and honour, and glory, and power, for ever and ever.*

After the homage of the angels, succeeds that of *all Creatures*, both animate and inanimate, which are *in heaven*, and *on the earth*, and *under the earth*, or in hell, and *in the sea*; and, in fine, of *all that are in them*, that is, of every individual atom of the creation. They are all *heard* to say: *To him* (God) *that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, benediction, and honour, and glory, and power, for ever and ever.* Thus they pour forth their praises to God and the Lamb, for their creation, their conservation, the beautiful harmony and order they hold in the general system of nature, &c. In the verses 9th and 11th of the preceding chapter, see p. 14, three terms of praise were offered to *him that sitteth on the throne*; here a fourth is added, *viz. power*, on account of the *Lamb*, who has acquired all power over this world, and which is thus confessed by every individual part of it. In the same sense St. Paul declares, that *in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth.* Philipp. ii. 10.

V. 14. *And the four living creatures said: Amen. And the four and twenty ancients fell down on their faces, and adored him that liveth for ever and ever.*

To the above praises and homage offered to God and the Lamb, the *four living Creatures*, or ancient Prophets, join their assent by saying, *Amen*. This conclusion comes suitably from them who had so often proclaimed to the world the great works of the Almighty and the Lamb,

and their gracious dispensations to mankind. Then, conformably to what is said in the preceding chapter, verse 9th and 10th, see p. 14, the *four and twenty Anciens* close this awful religious scene of homage and praise by *adoring* the Almighty in unity of Godhead.

Thus we have seen an august scene exhibited, where God the Almighty appears, shining in all the brightness and dignity of Divine Majesty, and round him an illustrious Choir, composed of the ancient prophets represented by four emblematical animals, and of four and twenty Ancients representing all the Saints of the ages antecedent to Christianity. By this disposition of the scene, our view is removed back to the time of the close of the Old Law, and the commencement of the New, that is, to the birth of the Christian Church. The ancient Saints and Prophets sound forth their praises, their thanks, and hymns of gratitude to God for all his blessings received, and for the all-wise and bountiful economy he had exercised over them through all past ages. And thus they close up the period of the patriarchal and Jewish Church.

The Lamb then appears, who had just been slain for the redemption of the world. He has by his blood acquired the dominion over the whole succeeding race of mankind; and therefore he now opens a new period by founding his own Church, the Church of the Christians, of which he is declared, *conjointly* with God, Lord and Governor. Immediately the ancient prophets and saints direct their homage to him, acknowledging they owe to him their redemption, their power and bliss, and all other blessings. Thus they give testimony to the Lamb, they confess his sovereign power, and that his reign now begins, and will last for ever. The same is re-echoed by every part of the creation.—We must observe, that no Christian saints appear in this celestial assembly: The reason is, because the scene exhibits to us the moment in which Christianity commences.

The opening of the first Seal.

Apoc. Chap. VI. v. 1. *And I saw*, says St. John,

that the Lamb had opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures, as it were the voice of thunder, saying: Come and see.

V. 2. *And I saw: and behold a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow, and there was a crown given him, and he went forth conquering that he might conquer.*

Previously to the explication of the text, let us observe, that at the opening of each seal of this mysterious book, a new spectacle offers itself to St. John, which seems to represent, under an emblematical figure, what is written in that part of the book that is laid open on breaking the seal. And the seven figurative representations, that thus follow on the opening of the seven seals, mark seven particular events, which open the seven ages, into which is divided the whole period of the Church's existence.——This observation premised,

At the opening of the first seal, there appears to St. John a person upon a *white horse*. This person is our Saviour, as appears from chap. xix. of the Apocalypse, ver. 11 and 13, where St. John says, *I saw heaven open, and there appeared a white horse; and he that sat upon him, was called the Faithful and True——And his name is, the Word of God.* The *crown* that is here *given him*, and the *white* colour of his *steed*, show him victorious and triumphant. Christ had been victorious: First. over Satan, by overthrowing the dominion that murderous enemy had usurped over mankind; secondly, in purchasing, by extreme suffering, and at the price of his blood, a perpetual peace between God and man: thirdly, in conquering death, by raising himself to life from the grave by his own power. Fraught with these victories, he had ascended triumphant in glory into heaven, amidst the acclamations of the heavenly choirs, singing, *Princes, lift up your gates; eternal gates, be ye lifted up, and the King of Glory shall enter in*, Psalm xxiii. 7. Being therefore exalted to all the honours of a glorious King and *Conqueror*, he here appears in the equipment belonging to that character, and with *bow* in hand sets out to prosecute his *conquests*, in subduing the world to the dominion of faith by the

preaching of his Apostles, and his other succeeding Ministers.

Thus then opens and commences the first age of the Christian Church, which may take its date from the day of Pentecost, or Whitsunday, when the Apostles began to preach. And the conquest, or conversion, which followed, of so many nations to the faith, shows *evidently* in Christ the exercise of that *power*, which was attributed to him, Apoc. v. 12. See p. 20. Let us also observe, that, on opening the seal, *one*, or the first of *the four living creatures*, which, as we have shown, represents the prophet Isaiah, says to St. John, *Come and see*; which is spoken, as with the *voice of thunder*, to mark the importance of the vision: And the invitation to a view of our triumphant Saviour, comes properly from Isaiah, who had so minutely prophesied of all that related to him.

To understand how the conquest of the world was made to the Gospel, we must take notice that, as soon as the Apostles had received the Holy Ghost, ten days after the ascension of Christ, they immediately proceeded to execute the commission given them by their Divine Master, when he told them, *Go and teach all nations*, Mat. xxviii. 19, but *to begin by Jerusalem and Judea*, Luke xxiv. 47, and Act. Ap. I. 8. They spent therefore some time in labouring at the conversion of the Jews, of whom no small number embraced the Christian religion, though much the greater part remained obstinate in their infidelity. This work being done, the Apostles separated and dispersed themselves into different nations, to announce to them the new tidings of salvation. St. Peter retired to Antioch, where he founded a Church, and having governed it for seven years, and preached over a great part of lesser Asia, he went to Rome, and there fixed his see. St. Andrew preached to the Scythians, and afterwards in Greece and Epirus. St. Philip in higher Asia. St. Thomas preached to the Parthians, then eastwards as far as the Indies. St. Bartholomew went into Armenia, and some part of India. St. Matthew employed his labours in Parthia, and other eastern countries of

Asia. St. Simon in Mesopotamia and Persia. St. Jude, or Thaddee, in Mesopotamia and Arabia. St. Matthias in the countries bordering on the Caspian sea. St. John fixed his see at Ephesus in Asia minor, in which country he founded several Churches, which he governed till his death. The two St. James's, one of whom was the first bishop of Jerusalem, chiefly confined their preaching to Judea. St. Paul announced the gospel to many nations, but he was principally employed in Asia and Greece, and finished his mission in Rome.

By these zealous messengers of Christ, the gospel was spread throughout the world, according to that of the Royal Prophet: *Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth: and their words unto the ends of the world.* Psalm xviii. 5. The success of their preaching was the more wonderful, as all human considerations conspired against it. This new doctrine was *entirely* opposite to the received maxims of the world; it declared war against the passions of mankind; it taught self-denial and mortification; it preached a contempt of what is generally admired; it condemned all other religions, and *absolutely* required a most virtuous conduct in all its professors. Moreover, its ministers, the Apostles, were not possessed of those natural endowments which might make impression upon their hearers, and conciliate their minds to a new doctrine. They were illiterate men, chosen from the lowest conditions of life, destitute of all human succour, without the advantages of education, and without human eloquence. Notwithstanding the want of these helps, they were inspired with such a spirit of zeal, and with such supernatural force of elocution, as not to be resisted. But above all, the power of performing miracles was their peculiar badge, which stamped upon their words the seal of Divine attestation. These were the means by which truth began to shine forth in a garb which it had never worn before. It now laid open to view the errors mankind had hitherto been enslaved to, it withdrew the veil of ignorance that had overshadowed human reason, it dispelled the darkness of paganism and super-

stition; and by its native lustre it discovered the imperfection of all the systems of doctrine proposed before by the so much boasted philosophers of antiquity. Such became the case with a Socrates, a Plato, an Epictetus, a Cicero, &c. Those sages, as they were styled, not aware of the weakness of human reason unassisted by revelation, gave precepts of morality and maxims for the conduct of life, which were in admiration for many ages: But when that light appeared, which came down from heaven with the son of God, it then became manifest how defective those dictates were. In the same manner as the stars in the firmament strike us with their lustre, and shine with advantage, in the night; but when the great luminary of the day, the sun, comes forth, the brightness of the stars immediately fades, and soon vanishes: So likewise, when the Son of God thought fit to grace this world with his presence, it became necessary that all former legislators and philosophers, however eminent, should be eclipsed by his superior excellence, and that every human institution of doctrine should give place to the new precepts of his all-comprehending wisdom.

The great structure of religion, which the Apostles had begun, was carried on by their faithful and zealous successors through the subsequent ages. Thus *He went forth conquering that He might conquer;* and, thus He doth to this day, and will continue so to do.

Prelude to the Sounding of the seven Trumpets.

Apoc Chap. VIII. v. 2. *And I saw*, says St. John, *seven angels* standing in the presence of God: there were given to them seven trumpets.*

St. John *now* is directed to turn his eyes to the *seven angels*, who were seen standing before the throne of God in heaven, Apoc. i. 4. & iv. 5. see p. 4, and *seven trumpets* are given to them; one of these trumpets is sounded in each of the seven ages of the Church, probably by that angel who is appointed to superintend that age —Then,

* In the Greek text, *the seven angels.*

V. 3. *And another angel came, and stood before the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God.*

V. 4. *And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel.*

In imitation of the golden altar of incense that stood in the Jewish tabernacle before the Holy of Holies, there is here a *golden altar* of incense placed *before the throne of God*, to which an angel comes, holding a *golden censer*. This is presently filled with *much incense*, which represents the *prayers of all the saints*, that is, of all the servants of God on earth: And thus the angel offers these prayers, which *ascend up* as the odour of so much fragrant *incense before God*, so pleasing are they to him. We saw, Apoc. v. 8. see p. 18, the saints in heaven presenting the prayers of the faithful to the Lamb; and here the same kind of function is performed by an angel; which shows how the angels are employed in good offices for mankind. Another instance of this sort is seen in the book of Toby, where the angel tells that holy man, *When thou didst pray with tears,—I offered thy prayers to the Lord*, Tob. xii. 12.

V. 5. *And the angel took the censer, and filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it on the earth, and there were thunders, and voices, and lightnings, and a great earthquake.*

The angel having performed the religious rite of offering the prayers of the saints to God, he then takes the *censer*, and *fills it with fire* from the *altar* of Holocausts; such altar appearing to St. John in heaven similar to that which formerly belonged to the Jewish tabernacle. The censer so filled with *fire*, the angel *casts* down *on the earth*. This is a figurative intimation of God's design to try his servants *on earth* by the *fire* of tribulation, like gold in the furnace. The Almighty had just received their prayers with great complacency, and doubtless never ceases to keep a paternal eye over them, and to cover them with his protection: But

he here lets them know, it is the disposition of his Providence to put them to the test, that those who are truly his servants, and firm in their faith and charity, may be distinguished from the hypocrites and pusillanimous. Accordingly, upon the falling of the censer on the earth, there happen *thunders, and voices, and lightnings, and a great earthquake;* which metaphorically express four various kinds of tribulations, which are to befall the Christians at the sounding of the four first trumpets, and which will then be seen; and there the above-mentioned four metaphorical terms will be explained. The three last trumpets, as we shall see hereafter, have three particular woes annexed to them.

V. 6. *And the seven angels, who had the seven trumpets, prepared themselves to sound the trumpet.*

The trumpet is generally sounded for war, or to give notice of any public danger or alarm. And such is the case here. The *seven angels* sound at different intervals of time their *trumpets*, to announce alarms to the Christians, such as persecutions, heresies, wars, &c. trials with which they must struggle, and which the Almighty sends them for their probation.

It may not be improper to observe, that the magnificent scene, which was exhibited in heaven in the prelude to the opening of the seals, receives here an addition by the appearance of two new objects, the altar of Incense and the altar of Holocausts. These are very aptly introduced, to point out some particular circumstances that have relation to the trumpets. The first altar, on which the Jews offered daily incense to God, presents to our mind the daily offering the Christians make to God of their fervent and holy prayers, which ascend to heaven like sweet perfumes: while, at the same time, the altar of Holocausts, on which the Jewish victims were burned, is here a just representation of martyrdom, by which the Christians are immolated as so many victims to God in the fire of persecution.

As before the opening of the seals we saw, p. 22, the close of the old law and the commencement of the new; so here, before the sounding of trumpets a confirmation of the same appears, by the two Jewish altars, of

Incense and Holocausts being removed out of sight on the angels proceeding to sound the trumpets which relate to the Christian Church.

The Sounding of the first Trumpet.

Apoc. Chap. VIII. v. 7. *And the first angel sounded the trumpet, and there followed hail and fire, mingled with blood, and it was cast on the earth, and the third part of the earth* was burnt up, and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all the green grass was burnt up.*

This shower of *hail and fire mingled with blood*, denotes the cruel and bloody persecutions exercised against the Christians in the three first centuries, till Constantine, the first Christian emperor, put a stop to them. The words *hail*, *fire*, and *blood*, pretty plainly express some of the most remarkable kinds of death inflicted on the Christians; some being consumed by *fire*, others having their *blood spilt* by the sword, and others being stoned to death, which kind of execution may very well be represented by *hail*. This terrible shower fell upon the *earth*, which here represents the Church of Christ, in its first quiet state, in allusion to the land, which is the stable part of the terraqueous globe. Then *a third part of the earth* was destroyed by the shower, that is, the persecutions swept away nearly one third part of the Christians. But in particular, *a third part of the trees* was *burnt*, that is, a third part of the pastors, with their clergy, meant here by the *trees*, were sacrificed in the fire of persecution: And *all the green grass*, or best grass, was consumed, that is, all the most fervent and perfect among the faithful were blessed with the crown of martyrdom.

Persecutions, tortures, violent deaths by martyrdom, are such objects of alarm and terror to human nature, that they may with great propriety be metaphorically styled *thunders*, Apoc. viii. 5. see p. 28.

At the opening of the first seal we saw the conver-

* *The third part of the earth was burnt*, is not in the common Greek text; but it is found in several very good manuscripts and in the Syriac and Arabic versions.

sion of Jews and Pagans to the Christian faith, and thus the kingdom of Christ took its rise. But no sooner is the infant Church formed, than the trumpet of alarm sounds, and Christ permits his new-acquired people to be subjected to rigorous trials by repeated persecutions, and their fidelity to be put to the strictest test. Such is the economy of his unfathomable wisdom.

Satan, who had usurped for many ages almost an universal empire in the world, by setting himself up to be worshipped in the place of God, seeing his throne shaken by the propagation of the Christian religion, was deeply stung, and resolved to exert his utmost efforts to crush the new rising power, and to support his own. For that purpose he set out by stirring up the potentates of the earth: And as the monarchy of Rome was at that time exceedingly powerful, and extended over a great part of the then known world, his chief attempt was to instil the poison of his malice into the minds of the pagan Roman emperors, and to inspire them with the rankest hatred against the Christian religion. To open the scene of his hellish machinations, he made use of the emperor Nero, doubtless a very proper instrument for the work, as being already a monster of cruelty and vice. He freely drank the poisonous cup offered him by the devil, and first of all the Roman monarchs drew his sword against the Christians. Nine other general persecutions were raised by the subsequent emperors, of all which we shall here insert a brief account.

The first Persecution under NERO.

This brutal prince had privately ordered the great city of Rome to be set on fire, which reduced the greatest part of it to ashes. Finding himself detested by the people, who imputed the mischief to him, in order to clear himself he endeavoured to transfer the odium upon the Christians, whom he charged with being the incendiaries, and immediately began to persecute them in the most bloody manner. Some were wrapt up in skins of wild beasts, and so exposed to be worried by dogs; others were crucified; others burn-

ed alive, being clad in coats dipt in pitch or brimstone, that they might serve as torches in the night. The Church celebrates, on the 24th of June, the memory of all these martyrs, the first fruits which heathen Rome sent up to heaven. Before the end of this persecution, suffered the two great pillars of the Church, S. S. Peter and Paul, at Rome, in the year 67; the first being crucified with his head downwards; the second, being a Roman citizen, was put to death by the sword. In consequence of the severe edicts of Nero, many Christians were sacrificed to the fury of the pagans in the different provinces of the Roman empire.

The second Persecution under Domitian.

The disturbances in the Roman empire under the emperors Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, and the humane disposition of Vespasian and Titus, gave some rest to the Christians, till Domitian succeeding, began the second general persecution. This emperor, a second Nero in cruelty, instigated by the malice of Satan, published in the year 95 new edicts throughout the empire against the Christians, by virtue of which great numbers were made victims of religion. In Rome, among others, he put to death Flavius Clemens, his own cousin german, for being a Christian, and banished Clemens's wife Domitilla. S. S. Nereus and Achilleus suffered also in this persecution; as likewise Antipas, mentioned in chap. ii. v. 13, of the Apocalypse, whom Christ calls there *his faithful witness*. It was by this tyrant's order that St. John the Apostle was sent for to Rome, and cast into a caldron of boiling oil; but coming out more vigorous than before, he was banished to the Isle of Patmos.

The third Persecution under Trajan.

The Christian Religion, by the beginning of the second century, had prodigiously increased, and spread itself through a great extent in Europe, Asia, and Africa; and all considerable cities were governed by their respective bishops. Trajan, the Roman emperor, according to the Pagan writers, was of a mild temper,

and possessed of many amiable qualities, which gained him from the senate the title of "Optimus," or "Good Prince." But this glorious title received a black and indelible stain from the persecutions which he permitted to be carried on against the Christians. For though he issued out no new edicts against them, he suffered the former sanguinary laws to be executed in different parts of the Empire in the years 106, 107, &c. A clear instance of this appears in his answer to Pliny the Younger, Governor of Pontus and Bithynia, who had written to know his pleasure, what should be done with the Christians, who were very numerous in the provinces of his government. Trajan's answer was, "Let "the Christians not be sought for; but if they be accu- "sed and convicted as such, let them be punished." The chief of those who gained the crown of martyrdom in his reign were, St. Clement, Bishop of Rome; St. Simeon, Bishop of Jerusalem; St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, whom Trajan himself condemned and sent to Rome, there to be torn to pieces by wild beasts in the Amphitheatre.

The fourth Persecution under Marcus Aurelius.

The fourth persecution finds its place in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, in the year 166, &c. Many Christians indeed had been sacrificed under the Emperor Adrian, by virtue of former laws remaining in force, but at last he mitigated them by an express order. Marcus Aurelius was extremely superstitious; and as he also boasted of being a philosopher, he was easily instigated by the heathen priests and philosophers against the Christians, whose principles of religion and philosophy were so contrary to theirs. If Aurelius issued out no new edicts, he permitted at least the Governors of provinces to put in execution the laws subsisting. And that the persecution was very violent and bloody, appears from the several Apologies presented to him by St. Justin, Melito, Athenagoras, and Apollinaris, entreating him to put a stop to it. The same is also evident from the number of those that were crowned with martyrdom. In Asia, St. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna,

was put to death, and many others about the same time. At Rome was beheaded St. Justin, who wrote two Apologies for the Christians. Several others shared with him the same crown. At Lyons, St. Pothinus the Bishop, and many of all ages and conditions, were, through the most acute and cruel torments, conveyed to Heaven. At length the Emperor put an end to the persecution about the year 174, prevailed upon, as is supposed, by the signal favour he and his army, in the German war, received from Heaven, by the prayers of the Christian Legion. He was shut up in narrow defiles, and surrounded by the Quadi and Marcomanni, and his soldiers were ready to perish with excessive heat and thirst. Under these calamities, the Christian soldiers humbly addressed themselves to God, who immediately sent a plentiful shower of rain, which relieved Aurelius's army, and at the same time a violent storm of hail, with dreadful flashes of lightning upon the enemies; which gave a complete victory to the Emperor.

The fifth Persecution under Severus.

After the death of Marcus Aurelius in 180, the Christians enjoyed a respite of tolerable peace till the reign of Severus, a crafty, treacherous, and bloody prince, and by his nature truly answering his name. He at first treated the Christians with humanity, but was afterwards prevailed upon by their enemies to commence a furious persecution. He not only suffered the Governors of the provinces to persecute the Christians by the laws already standing, but he gave out in the year 202 fresh edicts, which were executed with such rigour and barbarity, that the Faithful imagined the time of Antichrist was come. About the beginning of this persecution, Tertullian wrote his Apology for the Christians, a masterly work, in which he refutes all the calumnies published against them, shows the divine morality of their doctrine, and exposes the absurdity of the Pagan religion. But it does not appear that so pathetic an address had any effect. The fire of this persecution raged through all the provinces of the Roman Empire, but far from consuming the Church of Christ, it only

served to purify it, and to make it shine with greater lustre. The most illustrious victims immolated on this occasion were, St. Victor, Bishop of Rome; Leonidas, Origen's father, beheaded at Alexandria, and several of Origen's scholars; St. Potamiæna, an illustrious virgin, and her mother Marcella, after various torments, were burned alive; S. S. Felicitas and Perpetua, the one a noble lady in Mauritania, and brought to bed but the day before; the other at that time a nurse; St. Speratus and his companions beheaded at Carthage; St. Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, and many thousands of his people martyred with him.

The sixth Persecution under Maximinus.

During the space of twenty-four years, times were peaceable for the Christians, till Maximinus stept into the Imperial Throne in 235, a man of base origin, and barbarous nature. He raised the sixth persecution, chiefly against the bishops and ministers, and the teachers and principal promoters of Christianity. The historian Capitolinus says of him, that "never did a more "cruel beast tread on the earth." St. Pontian Pope suffered in this persecution, and several others. Happily it did not last above two years, Maximinus being cut off after a short reign.

The seventh Persecution under Decius.

For ten years from the death of Maximinus till the reign of Decius, the Church enjoyed a tolerable tranquillity: and as Maximinus's persecution was chiefly levelled against the pastors, the bulk of Christians had tasted the sweets of peace for thirty-eight years. This period of tranquillity occasioned, conformably to the bent of human nature, a remissness in the Christians, and a relaxation in their morals; of which St. Cyprian, who lived at that time, grievously complained. Almighty God, therefore, to punish their neglect, to revive their fervour, and to try them in a fiery crucible, permitted a most severe general persecution under Decius, in the year 249. This savage emperor, seeing that Christianity had gained prodigious growth over the whole Ro-

man empire, and that Paganism on that account visibly declined, was resolved to support the latter by effectually ruining the former. He therefore issued out a cruel edict against the Christians, and sent it to all the governors of provinces. The Christians were immediately driven from their houses, and stript of their estates: whips and prisons, fires and wild beasts, scalded pitch and melted wax, sharp stakes and burning pincers, were the ordinary instruments used for their torments. Slow tortures were particularly employed, in order to tire out the patience of the sufferers. This persecution crowned at Rome Fabian Pope, Abdon, and Sennen, and many others. A great harvest of martyrs was made at Carthage: Apollonia, with many others, suffered at Alexandria, as related by St. Dionysius, bishop of that see. In the East it swept away Babylas, bishop of Antioch, Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, with thousands more. Such was the rage of the pagan magistrates, that the historian Nicephorus declares, it would be easier to count the sands of the sea, than to reckon up all the martyrs of this persecution. Many Christians fled from this scene of slaughter into the deserts. One of this number was St. Paul, of the province of Thebais in Egypt, who became an eminent anchoret, and is styled the first hermit.

The eighth Persecution under Valerian.

Valerian being invested with the imperial purple, was at first very favourable to the Christians; but he suffered his mind to be poisoned by the suggestions of magicians, who persuaded him, that to procure success in his wars, and prosperity to the empire, he must render the gods propitious by suppressing Christianity. In this view he issued out edicts, and commenced a bloody persecution in the year 257, which lasted three years and a half. Some of the chief martyrs were: at Rome, St. Stephen Pope, his successor, St. Xystus, with St. Lawrence, his deacon; St. Fructuosus, bishop of Tarragon in Spain; St. Saturninus, bishop of Toulouse, and St. Felix, of Nola. Many were the holy victims in Egypt, as St. Dionysius, bishop of Alexan-

dria, relates. Violent also was the persecution in other parts of Africa, where many suffered death, and many others were condemned to work in the mines: But the most eminent of the martyrs in that part of the world, was St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, who had so strenuously supported the Christian religion by his writings and example, and had encouraged others to martyrdom both by his words and letters. He had escaped the persecution of Decius; but now he was first banished, then beheaded, for the faith, in the neighbourhood of Carthage.

The ninth Persecution under Aurelian.

The emperor Aurelian, in the beginning of his reign, behaved with humanity towards the Christians; but being strongly attached to idolatrous worship, he at last sent out, in the year 274, violent edicts to exterminate the Christian religion: but as he died soon after, this persecution was short. The principal victims it sent to heaven were, St. Felix Pope, St. Mamas, at Cæsarea in Cappadocia, St. Agapitus, in Italy, St. Savinianus, bishop of Troyes, St. Reverianus, bishop of Autun, St. Columba Virgin, and many others in France.

The tenth Persecution under Dioclesian.

The tenth and last general persecution, the most severe and most bloody of all, was set on foot by the emperor Dioclesian. The Christian religion had by this time gained so much ground, that in every province of the Roman empire, and even almost in every town, multitudes professed it, and public Churches had been built, where they assembled for prayer, and other holy exercises. Satan now raging with envy, and seeing his empire near expiring, seemed to summon up his whole strength, in order to make a last effort for the support of idolatry, and the destruction of Christianity. He inspired Dioclesian, and his colleague Maximian, with the most rancorous hatred against the Christians. Dioclesian published an edict at Nicomedia, in the year 303, ordering the Churches to be pulled down, and the Holy Scriptures to be burnt. But this was only a prelude

to his subsequent inhuman edicts, which presently deluged the Roman empire with Christian blood. Cruelties, hitherto unheard of, and all kinds of tortures, were employed upon the Christians. Some were hung up with their heads downwards, and suffocated by slow fires, as in Mesopotamia; others were broiled upon gridirons, as in Syria. Some were slain by breaking their legs, as in Cappadocia; others had sharp reeds thrust under their nails, and others melted lead poured upon them, as in Pontus. Some were beheaded in Arabia; others devoured by wild beasts in Phœnicia. In Egypt infinite numbers suffered: Some of whom, after being cruelly scourged, racked, and having their flesh torn off with pincers, or raked off with pieces of broken pots, were committed to the fire, or thrown into the sea. Phrygia, a populous city, consisting all of Christians, was surrounded by a body of soldiers, who set fire to it, and men, women, and children, were all consumed in the flames. In fine, Eusebius the historian, who was eye-witness of some of these barbarous scenes, says, that the cruelties exercised against the Christians were innumerable, and exceeded all relation. He also adds, that the people were not suffered to buy or sell any thing, or to draw water from the public fountains, without first offering incense to idols, placed there for that purpose. It would be endless to reckon up the number of martyrs of these times.

Thus was the persecution carried on by Dioclesian in the East, and Maximian in the West; and afterwards by their successors, for the space of ten years, with some interruptions, till Constantine, the first Christian emperor, put a stop to it in the year 313, and gave peace to the Church.

Whoever desires a fuller account of all these persecutions, may have recourse to the writers of ecclesiastical history, Eusebius, Lactantius *de mortibus Persecutorum*, Tillemont, Cave, &c. What has been here said, explains sufficiently the meaning of the shower of *hail and fire mixed with blood*, which fell upon the Christian Church, according to the text of Apocalypse here considered.

And now may we not, for a moment, take a quiet view of the triumph of the Church over all her enemies? The devil, like a fierce lion, had closely watched her, and made repeated furious attempts to devour her: But the *Lion of the tribe of Judah* stood for her protection, and defeated all his assaults. Those haughty princes, the Roman emperors, by Satan's instigation, bore down against her with all the weight of their power, to which the faithful opposed no other arms but patience: Nevertheless the edifice of the Church could not be thrown down, because He that built it was himself the *Corner-stone*, and had declared, it should for ever stand. The pagans persuaded themselves, that by dint of tortures and severities, they could totally crush the Christians, and extinguish their very name: but their expectations were frustrated, and they saw them daily increase under those very oppressions. The more Christians they tortured, or put to death, the more converts were made, from the view of such amazing examples of fortitude; and the Christian blood they spilt, as Tertullian told them, was the seed of new Christians. The heavy pressures the Church laboured under, served but to purify her members like gold in the furnace, and from the fire of persecution she rose up, like the Phœnix, more bright and more vigorous. The idolatrous emperors of Rome looked upon the Christian religion as a mere human invention, and in this lay their mistake: They were ignorant that the work was of Divine construction, that it was the new *kingdom of the God of heaven* which had just been founded, and to which, by the eternal decrees, all other kingdoms were to give place, Dan. ii. 44. It was *the Stone*, foretold by the prophet Daniel, *cut out of the mountain without hands*, Dan. ii. 34, which should break down all preceding powers, even the great empire of Rome itself; that is, it should destroy the empire of idolatry in all nations, and reduce them to the obedience of its own laws, even Rome itself, which was to be for a time the chief seat and fortress of idolatry. *This Stone*, pursues the same prophet, *grew up into a great mountain, and filled the whole earth*, Dan. ii. 35, which signi-

fies, that the extent of the Christian religion was to have no other bounds but the extremities of the earth. Such being the solid foundation of the Church laid by the *Almighty's* hand, all human efforts against her must of course prove vain and abortive. The persecutions, however violent, had no other effect but to throw a gloomy veil over her for a while; but that being once removed, she appeared with new strength, and, like the sun emerging from an eclipse, she shone forth with greater lustre, and spread her influence over the whole earth.

Prelude to the pouring out of the Seven Vials.

Apoc. Chap. XV. v. 1. *And I saw*, says St. John, *another sign in heaven, great and wonderful: seven Angels, having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God* *.

Here is a new vision, *great and wonderful*, shown to St. John; *seven Angels* holding the figurative symbols of *seven plagues* or scourges, that is, of seven dreadful punishments. They are called *the last*, because *in them is filled up* or completed *the wrath of God*, being inflicted on mankind in the *last* period of the world, which is the period of Christianity. Accordingly, the first of these scourges takes place, as we shall see, soon after the beginning of the Christian era, and the seventh puts an end to the world.

V. 2. *And I saw*, continues St. John, *as it were, a sea of glass mingled with fire, and them that had overcome the Beast, and his image* †, *and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having the harps of God;*

V. 3. *And singing the canticle of Moses the servant of God, and the canticle of the Lamb, saying: Great and wonderful are thy works, O Lord God Almighty: Just and true are thy ways, O King of Ages* ‡.

* In the Greek text, *having seven plagues the last, because in them was fulfilled the wrath of God.*

† In the Greek is added, *and his character.*

‡ In the Greek, *King of Saints.*

V. 4. *Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and magnify thy name? for thou only art holy. For all nations shall come, and shall adore in thy sight, because thy judgments are manifest.*

By the *sea of glass* is meant, as before explained, the firmament that makes the floor of heaven; which here is said to be *mingled with fire*, in allusion to the persecutions and troubles, which the faithful servants of God, who are seen standing on this *sea*, have sustained during the whole course of the Christian ages. For here, it must be observed, we are transferred to the moment of time when all the seven scourges are completed and past, which is at the end of the world. Supposing ourselves, therefore, at that point of time, we see a great body of Christian saints *standing upon the sea of glass*. But who in particular are they? *Those who have overcome the Beast, and his image, and his character*, or mark, *and the number of his name*. By a Beast is generally meant an animal that destroys mankind, or ravages a country. In allusion to that idea, the *Beast* here stands for idolatry and heresy; both which always make great devastation and desolation in the Church. Pursuant to that double meaning of the *Beast*, its *image* denotes either the idols of the pagan gods, or the pernicious tenets of heresy. By the *character* or mark of the *Beast*, we may understand, either a real distinctive mark of idolatry or heresy, or a special power exercised in defence of either. The *number of the name* of the *Beast* is appropriated, as we shall see hereafter, to the famous abettor of idolatry, Antichrist. Those Christian champions, therefore, who have courageously suffered death, or persecution, or other tribulations, rather than join with idolatry or heresy under any respect whatever, are here collected together in heaven, holding in their hands celestial *harps* to sound the praises of God. They are employed in *singing the canticle of Moses the servant of God, and the canticle of the Lamb*: the first, to acknowledge the power and justice of God in the seven terrible *plagues* or punishments, which he has inflicted upon their enemies, the idolaters and heretics. Thus in that sense they sing: *Great and wonderful are*

thy works, O Lord God Almighty. This canticle is here said to be the canticle of *Moses the servant of God,* because it bears the sense, and is sung in imitation, of the canticle which the Israelites sung to God, after having passed the Red Sea under the conduct of Moses, and seen their enemies perish in its gulf. For thus sung they: *Let us sing to the Lord; for he is gloriously magnified, the horse and the rider he has thrown into the sea,* &c. Exod. xv. 1. To the canticle of Moses the Christian saints immediately join the *canticle of the Lamb,* singing: *Just and true are thy ways, O Kings of Saints;* thus extolling his justice and bounty in his dispensations to them, for having subjected them to severe trials, having safely conducted them through by his grace, and crowned them with victory. Then they conclude their religious hymn in addressing Almighty God thus: *Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and magnify thy name? For thou only art holy: for all nations shall come, and shall adore in thy sight, because thy Judgments,* or punishments on the impious, *are manifest.*

From what has been exhibited in this scene, we learn, that the Almighty is jealous of whatever injuries are offered to his servants, and takes upon himself the judgment of their cause. Though for the proof of their zeal, and for their greater crown, he permits their enemies for a while to exercise their tyrannical power over them, yet in his wisdom he reserves to himself a time, in which he will revenge the evils done to them, and severely punish their persecutors. Not only former ages furnish a great number of known instances of such punishments, but the word of God openly declares such to be the tenour of the divine economy. *Will not God,* said our Saviour, *revenge his Elect who cry to him day and night: and will he have patience in their regard? I say to you, that he will quickly revenge them,* Luke xviii. 7, 8.—Hence we are prepared for what follows.

V. 5. *And after these things,* proceeds St. John, *I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened.*

V. 6. *And the seven Angels came out of the temple,*

having the seven plagues, clothed with clean and white linen, and girt about the breast with golden girdles.

Here the scene changes, and is carried back to the period of time that immediately precedes the beginning of the *seven plagues* or punishments. This removal of the scene St. John insinuates by the unusual circumlocution, *after these things I looked, and behold.* Then *the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened.* St. John sees in heaven a tabernacle of testimony, similar in form to the ancient Jewish tabernacle; and the *Temple*, that is, the Holy of Holies, or sanctuary of this heavenly tabernacle, had been shut up on the conclusion of the above canticles, and in it the Deity with the seven angels: but after a short space of time, on the commencement of the new scene, the *Temple* or sanctuary opens, and presently comes out from the presence of God the *seven Angels*, holding the *seven plagues*, clothed *in clean and white linen*, the emblem of the immortal glory they enjoy; and *girt about the breasts with golden girdles*, to show they are vested with the divine authority, and that they are actually proceeding to execute the work they are charged with.

V. 7. *And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven Angels seven golden vials, full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.*

V. 8. *And the temple was filled with smoke from the Majesty of God, and from his Power: and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven Angels were fulfilled.* Here the seven Angels receive *seven Vials full of the wrath of God;* upon the pouring out of which, as we shall see, follow the *seven plagues* or divine judgments upon the enemies of religion. The Vials are given to the Angels by *one of the four living creatures*, that is, by a prophet, because at that time the effects of the Vials have not happened, but are to happen in time to come, and therefore are here announced by way of prophecy. Then the temple in heaven is *filled with smoke*, manifesting, first, the *Majesty of God* residing there; secondly, his *Power*, which he is going to exert in the punishment of idolaters and heretics. A similar scene to this was former-

ly seen by the prophet Isaiah: *I saw*, says he, *the Lord sitting upon a throne high and elevated.—And the house was filled with smoke*, Isai. vi. 1. 4. In the present case, such is the overpowering force of the *smoke, that no man is able to enter into the Temple, till the seven Plagues of the seven Angels be fulfilled;* or, no man, soul and body together, *is able to enter into the Temple*, the *Temple* of Heaven, *till the seven plagues of the seven Angels be fulfilled;* till the seven severe scourges of God, imported by the pouring out of the *seven Vials*, have been inflicted on the enemies and persecutors of his Church. The Almighty, by his power, carries on his Church, through the period of time he thinks fit to allot it, and in its progress punisheth its opposers and enemies. When that period of time finishes, and the seven Vials are poured out, and the punishments executed, then follows the general judgment; after which, the saints will enter soul and body into the *Temple* of heaven. Almighty God is patient in his anger, and waits for the conversion of his undutiful and rebellious children; but their obstinacy arms at last his justice, and compels him to strike. *The Lord is a jealous God*, says the prophet, *and a revenger: the Lord is a revenger, and has wrath: the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries, and he is angry with his enemies*, Nahum. i. 2.

Apoc. Chap. XVI. v. 1. *And I heard*, continues St. John, *a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven Angels: Go and pour out the seven vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.*

A *great voice* is heard from *out of the Temple* or sanctuary, as coming from God who resides there; and delivering this order to the *seven Angels* who hold the seven Vials: *Go and pour out the seven vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.*

Conformably to the remarks we made before the opening of the seals, and before the sounding of the trumpets, 20 & 27, so here, before the pouring out of the vials, appears another scene of passing from the Jewish establishment to the Christian Church; the Jewish tabernacle with its sanctuary represented in heaven, being left by the Angels going forth to pour

out the vials of the wrath of God, which belong to the Christian age.

The pouring out of the first Vial of the wrath of God.

V. 2. *And the first* (Angel) *went, and poured out his vial upon the earth, and there fell a sore and grievous wound upon men who had the character of the beast, and upon them that adored the image thereof.*

Let us begin with observing that, as at the sounding of the first trumpet, the shower of hail, fire, and blood, fell upon the *earth*, that is, on the good part of the earth, or the Christian Church, so here the first Vial of the wrath of God is likewise poured out upon the *earth*, that is, upon the guilty part of the earth, or the persecutors of the Christians. The *sore and grievous wound* here inflicted, means a grievous punishment, which falls upon those *who have the character* or mark *of the Beast*, that is, on the pagan emperors of Rome, and their governors of the Roman provinces, as they bore in a special manner the mark of the *Beast*, or of idolatry, by employing their whole power in the support of it, and in persecuting the Christian religion. The same punishment also falls upon those who *adore the image of the Beast*, that is, on the idolatrous people of the Roman empire. The Roman state was the principal seat and bulwark of idolatry. Hence the pouring out of the first Vial of the wrath of God, announces the divine judgments on the monarchs of Rome and their subjects, for their supporting idolatry, an abomination so odious to God, and for the persecuting his Church and his people.——How this was fulfilled, the following short account will discover.

Nero, the first Roman emperor that imbrued his hands in Christian blood, had by his cruelties made himself the detestation of mankind. The people of Rome would no longer bear with him; his armies revolted from him, and set up a new emperor. He was deserted by his own guards, and the Roman senate pronounced sentence of death against him. In this desperate and forlorn condition, he fled from Rome into the country, to a house belonging to his freedman,

where, by the help of others, not having resolution himself, he got himself dispatched with a dagger. Thus fell Nero a victim to the vengeance of God.

But heaven was not appeased with this sole victim. The weight of divine justice, conformably to the tenour of the Vial, fell also upon the whole Roman state, which was torn to pieces by intestine convulsions. Galba succeeded Nero; but soon after rose up Otho, who got himself proclaimed emperor by the soldiers. Galba was murdered in the forum, and the people were trampled under foot in the streets of Rome by the brutal soldiers. During these troubles in the city, the Roman legions in Germany created their commander, Vitellius, emperor. This new contest between two competitors, could not be decided but by the sword, and the blood of many thousands of Romans. Four considerable battles were fought within the space of a few months, which gave the empire to Vitellius. But that same year the Roman armies in the East vested their own commander, Vespasian, with the imperial purple, in opposition to Vitellius. This continued the civil war, and a battle was fought between the two parties at the gates of Rome, in which the Vitellians lost the day. Rome was made a scene of slaughter, being taken and ravaged by its own subjects, and the capitol was laid in ashes.

Eight years after this calamity, sprung up a fresh one. Such a terrible plague infected the city of Rome, that, according to Eusebius, it swept away ten thousand inhabitants in a day for several days together.

Domitian, the second persecutor, felt also the weight of Divine anger. His own friends and domestics, with his wife Domitia, conspired against him and slew him. And after his death the Senate of Rome rescinded all his edicts, ordered all his statues to be pulled down, his name to be erased in all the public registers, and never more to be mentioned.

The emperors Trajan, Adrian, and Marcus Aurelius, having rather tolerated than raised persecution, escaped such visible judgments. But the empire itself felt the dismal effects of the Christian blood that had

been spilt during these reigns. In the eighteenth year of Trajan there happened a prodigious earthquake, which was almost general in the East, but Syria chiefly suffered. Many great towns were ruined. In the city of Antioch, where the emperor Trajan then resided, almost all the buildings were thrown down, and many thousands of people lost their lives, the emperor himself hardly escaping by leaping out of a window. In the second year of Marcus Aurelius, the Tiber overflowed a considerable part of Rome, carried away a multitude of people and cattle, ruined the country, and caused an extreme famine. This inundation was followed by swarms of insects, which devoured all that the flood had spared. Four years after, Lucius Verus coming victorious from the Parthian war, brought the plague along with him, which communicated the contagion to all the Roman provinces through which he passed, and carried off multitudes of people.

Severus, the fifth persecutor, among other misfortunes, had for son Antoninus Caracalla, a most vicious prince, who attempted to take away his father's life by stabbing him with his own hand, but was prevented by some that were present. This behaviour of his son threw Severus into a deep melancholy, which put an end to his life. The hand of vengeance pursued even his children. Caracalla murdered his brother Geta, and he himself underwent the same fate, which extinguished the family.

Maximinus, the sixth persecutor, became odious to the whole empire for his cruelties and his avarice. Africa rebelled against him. The Senate of Rome declared him an enemy to the state, and set up new emperors against him. He was so detested, that while he was besieging the city of Aquileia, his own soldiers fell upon him in his tent, slew both him and his son, sent their heads to Rome, and left their bodies to be devoured by dogs and birds of prey.

During the short reign of Maximinus, neither the city of Rome nor the provinces were free from wars, tumults, murders, and all sorts of calamities.

Decius the emperor, an execrable beast, as Lactan-

tius styles him, in his war with the Goths, being attacked by them, and seeing his eldest son killed before his face, and a great part of his army cut off, in despair run into a deep bog, where he perished. His body was not allowed common burial, but exposed to be devoured by the beasts of the earth and the birds of the air.

The horrible persecution in this emperor's reign seemed to rouse up afresh the indignation of Heaven. The Roman State was harassed by great wars and desolation from the Goths and other barbarous northern nations: and likewise by a dreadful pestilence, which spread itself over all the provinces, and lasted ten years, destroying incredible numbers of people. In the first year of the emperor Gallus, Decius's successor, who continued the persecution, the plague raged more furiously than ever, particularly at Carthage, in Africa. There vast multitudes were swept away every day, and the streets were filled with the carcasses of the dead. St. Cyprian, Bishop of that city, wrote on this occasion his book *on the Mortality*, or Pestilence, to comfort and encourage his own flock under the general calamity, and he zealously exhorted them not to be wanting in giving all assistance possible to the infected, though Pagans, and their declared enemies. He also wrote at this time to Demetrianus, a magistrate of Carthage, representing to him that these evils were not, as the Pagans pretended, punishments inflicted upon them by their Gods, for their permitting the growth of Christianity; but on the contrary, that they were real punishments sent from the true God of Heaven and Earth for their cruelties to the Christians. St. Cyprian tells him: "Never do we see the Christian name persecuted, but "the divine vengeance soon follows. Of this we have "a recent example, when so quick and so remarkable "a judgment lately appeared, in the violent death of the "Kings," meaning Decius and his son, "in the great "devastations made by the enemies, and the ruin of the "Roman army."

Valerian, the eighth cruel persecutor of the Christians, in his war with the Persians, was taken prisoner by Sapor their king, who treated him with the utmost in-

dignity, so far as to make him who had but just before been the greatest monarch in the world, to bow down and serve as a footstool to him (the king) to get on horseback. After keeping him seven years in this wretched slavery, Sapor ordered that his eyes should be pulled out, then that he should be flead alive, and his skin hung up as a trophy in one of the Persian temples.

After Valerian's persecution, Heaven and Earth seemed to conspire in the destrucion of the Roman Empire. Earthquakes overthrew cities, and destroyed great numbers of people. The sea overswelled its boundaries, and broke into many continents, drowning countries, cities, and people: and so violent a pestilence raged, that in Rome no less than five thousand persons died in a day. Besides this, the whole empire was invaded on all sides. A body of Germans crossed the Alps, and broke into Italy. Another body of the same enemies wasted Gaul and entered Spain. The Goths and Scythians ravaged Pontus, and great part of lesser Asia; and in Europe, all Greece, Macedon, and their confines. The Quadi and Sarmatians seized on Dacia and Pannonia; and the Persians and Parthians took possession of Mesopotamia, and a great part of Syria. To complete these disasters, there rose up thirty tyrants, who assuming the title of emperors, set up in opposition to one another, and to the reigning emperor Gallienus, which occasioned the empire to be more harassed and oppressed by its own intestine broils than by foreign devastations. These disasters had been foretold in the time of the persecution by the holy martyr St. Marian, when he was carried to execution. He announced them as a scourge impending on the State for the innocent blood that was *spilt* of the Christians.

The emperor Aurelian, another percecutor, was assassinated by his own secretary and some others, who had formed a conspiracy against him.

Dioclesian, the tenth persecutor, was compelled by Galerius, whom he had created Cæsar, to resign to him the empire, and retire himself to a private life. Afterwards he had the mortification to learn, that Constantine, who was become emperor, had pulled down

his statues. His wife and daughter were also put to death by Licinius. These disgraces, and the load of guilt that hung upon him, operated so strongly on his mind, that he could neither eat nor sleep. He sighed and groaned continually, often with tears in his eyes, sometimes tumbling himself on his bed, and sometimes on the ground. Thus he, who had governed the world for twenty years, as Lactantius observes, was reduced to so miserable a condition, that he finished his life by hunger and grief. This happened in the year 312.

Maximian, Dioclesian's colleague in the empire and in the persecution, had been also obliged to abdicate. He made several attempts to resume the purple, but seeing them all defeated, he hanged himself.

The succeeding emperors, Galerius, Maxentius, Maximinus Daia, and Licinius, endeavouring to carry on the persecution begun by Dioclesian and Maximian, met also with their due punishment. And first,

The hand of God was very visible upon the abominable Galerius, who had taken so much pains to instigate Dioclesian against the Christians. He was struck with a dreadful disease. An ulcer consumed the lower parts of his belly, and laid open his very bowels. He was devoured by vermin, and the whole mass of his body putrified. The stench that came from him was intolerable. His pains were so violent, that he roared out, and often attempted to kill himself. In these agonies he seemed to acknowledge the Hand that *lay over* him, and in order to avert it, he published an edict in favour of the Christians. But Heaven did not relent; and his distemper increasing, in a few days put a period to his life.

Maxentius was routed in a battle he fought with Constantine on the banks of the Tiber. As he was crossing that river in his flight, the bridge gave way with the weight of the crowd, and he was drowned.

Maximinus Daia being upon the point of engaging in battle with Licinius, made a vow to Jupiter, that if he got the victory, he would extinguish the very name of *Christian*. His army was totally defeated by a much lesser number; upon which he threw away his imperi-

al robe, and fled in the habit of a slave. He made different efforts to retrieve himself, but not succeeding, he resolved to make away with himself. For that purpose he eat and drank to great excess; but this not effecting it, he took poison, which burnt him within, and threw him into such a phrenzy, that he eat common earth. His pains became so intolerable, that he ran his head against the wall with such violence that his eyes started out. In the end he acknowledged the justice of his punishment for his cruelty to the Christians, and in the most exquisite torments he breathed out his last.

We learn from Lactantius, that not only the forementioned persecutors were all crushed by a superior power, but that their whole race was also cut off. The same fate, in like manner, attended many of the governors of the Roman provinces, who had so willingly concurred in executing the cruel and bloody statutes of the emperors for the extirpation of Christianity. The provinces of the East, where Maximinus commanded, had also shared in the disasters that usually followed persecution. A dreadful famine and plague had spread through them an universal desolation.

At the death of Maximinus Daia in 313, Lucinius remained master in the East. Constantine, who had reigned for some years as emperor in the West, being a Christian, or disposing himself to be so, prevailed upon Licinius to join with him in publishing an edict, which superseded all persecution, and granted full liberty and peace to Christians. This happy time lasted till the year 319, when Licinius altering his conduct, commenced a new persecution, and in 323 renewed the war he had before waged with Constantine. Licinius was vanquished both by sea and land, and upon his submission was allowed to retire to Thessalonica; but as he still meditated new disturbances, he was put to death by Constantine's orders in the year 324.

Thus then at last a period was put to the troubles of the Christians. Religion triumphed over every obstruction, which the idolatrous powers had opposed to it. The Christian Constantine reigned sole emperor: and

here is dated the remarkable epocha of the peace and triumph of the Church of Christ.

What has been said seems to show sufficiently the accomplishment of the text under consideration, that is, the severe judgments that fell upon the Roman emperors and the people of the empire, for their supporting idolatry, and persecuting the true worship of God. However, the hand of God did not stop here; nor was it satisfied with the slaughter of the great victims we have seen, nor with the large measure of calamities we have described. We shall see in the sequel the most astonishing stroke, by which the divine vengeance was at last completed. This was, the subversion of the great Roman empire, and the total destruction of pagan Rome itself.

Notwithstanding the preceding explanation of the text, we shall beg leave, in order to elucidate it the more, to add something further, particularly concerning the cessation of the pagan oracles, which chiefly happened in this first age. Christ came into the world not only to subdue all earthly powers by bringing them under the yoke of his doctrine, but also to conquer the devil, and to break down the dominion he had usurped over mankind. This we learn from our Saviour himself, who said: *Now is the judgment of the world: now shall the Prince of this world*, the devil, *be cast out*, John xii. 31. It is well known that the devil had long deluded mankind by the oracles which he pretended to deliver by the mouths of the idols, or their priests. Many of the answers thus pronounced as oracles, were undoubtedly mere inventions of the pagan priests themselves, who by such artifices imposed upon the ignorant. But the holy fathers and ancient ecclesiastical writers agree, that the demons themselves often spoke through the idols, and uttered predictions, which, whether true or false, could always, on account of their obscurity and ambiguity, be interpreted conformable to the events. All these oracular powers, even the most celebrated, were observed to decline after our Saviour's coming into the world, and the preaching of the gospel; and by degrees entirely ceased giving any more an-

swers. Thus speaks the historian Eusebius, who flourished in the reign of Constantine the great: "A "great proof of the imbecility of the demons is, that "their oracles are extinct, and give no more answers "as formerly, and that this happened about the time of "the coming of our Saviour; for as soon as his doctrine "was preached throughout the world, the oracles then "ceased." Dem. Evang. lib. 5. The pagan writers themselves universally complain, that their gods had forsaken their temples, and that their votaries did in vain solicit their counsels. Julian the apostate owns, "that the gods now-a-days seldom inspire any of their "ministers, nor can any one scarce obtain that inspira-"tion: but oracles, like other things, seem to alter "with the revolution of times." Apud S. Cyrill. lib. 6. contra Julian. Even the most celebrated oracle of Apollo at Delphos, some time before our Saviour's birth, had lost much of its credit, and after his appearance it entirely sunk away. Thus speaks Juvenal of it at the beginning of the second century, Satyr. 6.

——— Delphis Oracula cessant.

Now the Delphian Oracles are dumb.
DRYDEN'S Trans.

Thus also wrote the poet Lucan a little after the middle of the first century, lib. 5.

——— Non ullo fœcula dono
Nostra carent majore Deüm, quam Delphica fedes quod siluit.

Of all the wants with which this age is curst,
The Delphic silence surely is the worst.
ROWE'S Transl.

Plutarch wrote an express treatise to account for the silence of oracles. He employs arguments founded on natural, moral, and political causes; but all his philosophy proved insufficient to give a satisfactory reason. That this silence was solely owing to the dominion of Christ, and the establishment of his religion, is avowed even by some of the pagans themselves. Porphyry,

an inveterate enemy to Christianity, who lived towards the end of the third century, says: "It's no wonder if "the city for so many years has been afflicted with "sickness, Æsculapius, and the rest of the gods, hav- "ing withdrawn their former commerce with man- "kind: for since Jesus has begun to be worshipped, no "one has received any public help from the gods." Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. 5. On this subject see also Cave and others. The holy fathers are unanimous in their opinion, that the superior power of the Christian religion imposed silence on the devil, shut up the mouths of his priests and priestesses, and greatly abridged his influence in seducing mankind. Visible examples are not wanting in confirmation of this truth. St. Gregory of Nyssa relates, that St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, having entered a heathenish temple famous for oracles, purified it by the sign of the cross and prayer, and compelled the demon that resided there to leave the place. This the demon himself confessed to his votaries. We also learn from St. Chrysostom, Theodoret, Sozomen, and others, that at Daphne, in the neighbourhood of Antioch, there was a temple dedicated to Apollo, much celebrated for its oracles; but that the body of the holy martyr, St. Babylas, being brought and laid in a Church near the place, Apollo was instantly struck dumb. Thus was the devil compelled to yield to a force he had not felt before. It was certainly fit that, when the Son of God appeared on the earth, then Satan should be obliged to withdraw, and his impostures give place to the light of truth.

But it ought to be here observed, that this silencing of Satan was only a small part of the victory which Christ claimed over him. The whole system of idolatry, which that enemy of God had introduced into the world, was now, by the propagation of the Christian faith, shaken to the very foundation, and in a little time tumbled wholly to pieces. It was what the Almighty had long before announced by his prophets. Thus speaks Isaiah: *In that day the Lord shall be exalted alone, and the idols shall be utterly destroyed,* Isai. ii. 17, 18. *The Lord shall consume all the gods of the earth,*

says another prophet, Sophon. ii. 11. In proportion as the Christian religion was made known, the absurdity and impiety of idolatrous worship became manifest; the idols were thrown down, the fictitious deities they represented were scoffed at and ridiculed, and their ministers treated with the utmost contempt. In the same measure that He, who is the *Light of the world*, spread his influence, with the same speed, the *spirit of darkness* fled away, and retired into obscurity.

By degrees the devil's power was so weakened, that the meanest Christian could by a word expel him from those miserable creatures he tyrannically possessed, and force him to acknowledge with confusion, he was a rebel angel, an enemy to God. This practice is fully attested by St. Justin, St. Irenæus, Tertullian, St. Cyprian, and all the primitive fathers, and was common in the three first centuries of the Church. Nor was this power of the Christians over the devil to be wondered at, as it was founded on Christ, who had given his word for it. *These signs*, says he, *shall follow them that believe: In my name they shall cast out devils*, Mark xvi. 17.

Facts similar to those above related, are seen at this day in the idolatrous nations of the East-Indies, where the devil has maintained for a long time a settled worship and dominion. It is common there to see persons possessed, which he manages according to his will, and through their mouths delivers his oracles, and answers the questions put to him by his votaries. It is indeed no matter of surprise, that the devil enjoys so much power in places where he is personally worshipped. But at the same time there is seen the same virtue and efficacy residing in the Christian and Catholic religion, as in the primitive ages. The persons possessed are delivered from the evil spirit by the prayers or command of the Christians; and his influence is observed to decline as the gospel gains ground. These facts are certified by unquestionable testimonies of the Catholic missionaries residing in those countries, who are daily eye-witnesses of them. See *Lettres curieuses et edifiantes.*

CHAPTER III.

A further Account of the first Age of the Christian Church.

THE first seal, trumpet, and vial, have exhibited a general description of the first preaching of the Christian religion, the persecutions that attended it, and the divine vengeance on the authors of these persecutions. But as the history of the Church is highly interesting during this first age, or first three centuries, in which it took its birth and obtained its establishment, Christ is pleased to disclose to us, in chap. xii. of the Apocalypse, more circumstances belonging to this period, and unfolds the origin of all obstructions put to the propagation of the Christian religion, the agents employed for that purpose, with the progress of their machinations and efforts for the support of idolatry, and for suppressing the worship of God and Christ.

APOC. Chap. XII. v. 1. *And a great sign appeared in heaven: A Woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars:*

V. 2. *And being with child, she cried, travailing in birth, and was in pain to be delivered.*

Here is a *great sign*, or a noble figurative representation of the Christian Church. She appears *in heaven*, as drawing her origin from heaven, by her author, the Son of God; and she is represented under the form of a *woman, clothed with the sun, moon, and stars*, the most splendid raiment the whole compass of nature can furnish. She is clothed with the *sun*, as shining with the brightness of her sanctity, and with the glory of her spouse, Jesus Christ, who is the *sun of justice*, Mal. iv. 2. She holds the *moon under her feet*, as victorious over all sublunary beings, over all earthly powers, and worldly charms. She bears on her head

a crown of twelve stars, denoting the twelve Apostles, who, after Christ, her *sun*, make her principal ornament. She appears in labour, and suffering the excruciating pangs of child-bed in her first bringing forth children to Christ: Such are the struggles, and such are the difficulties, that obstruct the birth of Christianity, or the first propagation of the Christian faith. On one side, human laws, human passions, the general depravity of mankind, the pleasures of life: on the other side, the Jews, the pagans, all conspire to fight against her. But particularly:

V. 3. *And there was seen another sign in heaven: and behold, a great red Dragon, having seven heads and ten horns: and on his heads seven diadems.*

V. 4. *And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth: and the Dragon stood before the Woman who was ready to be delivered; that when she should be delivered, he might devour her son.*

Here the *Woman*, or the Christian Church, sees her chief enemy, the *great red* or cruel *Dragon*, which is the arch-devil, Satan, as St. John explains it below, verse 9th; and it appears in *heaven*, or the upper regions, because Satan draws his origin from above, having been formerly a bright angel. This *great Dragon* has *seven heads*, and upon each a *diadem* or crown, the types of seven emperors of pagan Rome, whom Satan actuates and employs as his chief agents, to oppose the rise of the Christian religion, and to maintain his own idolatrous worship. That such is the meaning of the *heads*, we learn from the explication given by the angel, chap. xvii. ver. 9th, of the Apocalypse: *The seven heads*, says the angel, *are seven mountains——And they are seven Kings:* Ancient Rome being here clearly indicated, as it was built on *seven mountains*. The seven *kings* or emperors here pointed at, seem to be, Nero, Domitian, Severus, Decius, Valerian, Dioclesian, and Antichrist, as being the principal and distinguished persecutors of the Christian Church. The *Dragon* has also *ten horns*, denoting ten provinces, into which the whole Roman empire is here divided. The *horns*, therefore, being animated by the *Dragon*, as well as the

heads, the governors of the *Roman provinces*, and the people, will be also instigated by the devil to persecute the Church of Christ.

It was said that the Dragon with *his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven*, that is, the apostate Angels whom he had seduced, and he *cast them to the earth*, to be there employed in seducing mankind. But the greatest part of them, we may suppose, were precipitated down into the infernal dungeons, according to that of St. Jude: *The angels who kept not their principality, but forsook their own habitation, he hath reserved under darkness in everlasting chains unto the judgment of the great day*, Ep. v. 6. The Dragon himself *stood before the woman who was ready to be delivered: that, when she should be delivered, he might devour her son.* Satan seeing his empire of idolatry in danger of being dissolved by the publication of the Christian religion, resolves to crush this in its origin, by stirring up the whole Roman power against it, and thus to *devour* the woman's offspring in its birth.

V. 5. *And she*, the woman, *brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with an iron rod: and her son was taken up to God, and to his throne. The woman* brings forth a *man-child*, that is, a masculine race of Christians, a progeny of holy champions, who, in conjunction with Christ their head, are *to rule all nations with an iron rod*, by a participation of his power, which he has promised them after the victory in their conflicts with the *Dragon. He that shall overcome*, says Christ, *and keep my works unto the end, I will give him power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron*, Apoc. ii. 26, 27. For such is the power he himself exercises over the impious part of mankind, as St. John tells us: *He shall rule the nations with a rod of iron*, Apoc. xix. 15, which had been attributed to him even long before: *Thou shalt rule them*, the nations, *with a rod of iron, and shall break them in pieces like a potter's vessel*, Psalm ii. 9. The Almighty Son of God breaks down empires, dissolves states, strikes princes, destroys people, that presume to contend with him. And *her son was taken up to God, and to his throne:* part of

the woman's offspring, or a considerable number of the Christians, when put to the trial in the persecutions, generously laid down their lives for Christ their Lord and Master, and thus triumphing over the *Dragon*, instead of falling a prey to him, are carried up to heaven, *to God and to his throne*, where they are associated with him in power and judgment, according to what we have just above seen, and according to this other promise: *To him that shall overcome*, says Christ, *I will give to sit with me in my throne; as I also have overcome, and am set down with my Father in his throne*, Apoc. iii. 21.

V. 6. *And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared by God, that there they should feed her a thousand two hundred and sixty days.*

During the cruel persecutions, which the Devil stirred up against the *woman*, or the Christian Church, by his instruments the heathen Roman emperors and magistrates, many of the Christians *fled* for shelter into the deserts, to inaccessible mountains, and other lurking places, as we learn from the holy fathers and historians of those times. Great multitudes in particular sought for refuge in the catacombs, at Rome, and in many other places. These subterraneous caverns, termed catacombs, are so prodigiously extensive, branching out into innumerable streets, which stretch to a great distance, especially at Rome, that they may be properly called a city under ground. The Christians lay concealed in these dark and dismal retreats, which, though originally made for other purposes, were *a place prepared by God*, were designed by him for a place of reception to his persecuted servants. In these various desolate abodes, the Christians, though in appearance destitute of all human succour, were nevertheless *fed* and supported by a special divine providence for the space of a *thousand two hundred and sixty days*, or three years and a half, which was the utmost duration of any of the Roman persecutions; some of which did not fill that period; none exceeded it.

V. 7. *And there was a great battle in Heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the Dragon, and the Dragon fought and his angels:*

V. 8. *And they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven.*

V. 9. *And that great Dragon was cast out, that old serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, who seduceth the whole world: and he was cast unto the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.*

The *Dragon*, or Satan, had with unrelenting malice stimulated the whole Roman power against the Christians by successive dreadful persecutions, as we have seen; but still he saw all his efforts baffled. Notwithstanding the immense slaughter that had been made, he found he could not extirpate the *woman's* offspring, it was so powerfully protected and supported by the divine hand: and he furthermore saw with deep regret, and to his confusion, that the blood of the martyrs became the seed of new Christians, and increased their number. The infernal spirit determines therefore to try another expedient; in pursuance of which he presumes to address the Almighty, challenging him to withdraw his hand, and suspend the extraordinary helps by which he supported his people, and then it would soon appear that the Christians had no real zeal or fortitude, but would abandon their God and the interests of Religion. Such are his malicious insinuations, to get the Christians wholly into his power. The same kind of artifice the malicious Spirit had formerly practised against the holy man Job. Thus Satan accused him before God: *Doth Job fear God in vain? Hast thou not made a fence for him, and his house, and all his substance round about, and blessed the work of his hands, and his possession hath increased on the earth?* Job i. 9, 10.

After thus enumerating God's blessings upon Job, the evil Spirit thus pursues: *But stretch forth thy hand a little, and touch all that he hath, and see if he blesseth thee not to thy face*, as above, ver. 11; that is, suspend thy favours, and withdraw all that thou hast given him, and see then if he does not fly in thy face. But to return to our own subject: The Almighty refusing to grant Satan his present request, and not being willing to suffer him any more to approach his throne with accusations against his people, ordered the archangel *Mi-*

chael, the protector of the Christian Church, to banish Satan utterly from the heavenly regions: upon which a fierce *battle* ensues between St. *Michael*, assisted by an army of angels, and Satan with his associates. These latter are worsted, and *cast down to the earth.* Upon which,

V. 10. *And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: because the accuser of our brethren is cast forth, who accused them before our God day and night.*

Upon the victory of St. Michael over Satan there follows joy and acclamation of the Christian saints in heaven, saying: *Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ*, &c. Now the Almighty has displayed his power, has assumed victory and dominion, and has ascertained the reign of Jesus *his Christ:* for now we see Satan foiled, and no more permitted to appear before the throne of God with *accusations* against *our brethren* on earth, as he was wonted to do.

V. 11. *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death.*

V. 12. *Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you that dwell therein.*

The saints in heaven thus continue their exultation, for the fortitude and constancy of their *brethren*, who, by virtue of *the blood of the Lamb*, that is, by virtue of the plentiful graces purchased for them by the blood of the Lamb, had generously borne *testimony* to, and laid down *their lives* for, that faith which Satan endeavoured to extirpate, and thus had *overcome* him. *Therefore, rejoice, O heavens*, for these new illustrious inhabitants, and rejoice you *that dwell therein*, for your new happy associates. Thus is celebrated the double victory; that of St. Michael, and that of the martyrs, over the devil. But on the other hand:

V. 12. *Wo to the earth and to the sea, because the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time.*

A terrifying alarm is here proclaimed to the *earth* and *sea*, that is, to the Christians, wherever they be, because the devil, now utterly expelled from heaven, *is come down in great wrath*, to exercise anew his fury against them. The Almighty had rejected the fiend's malicious suggestion of withdrawing his powerful graces and protection from his people, but by an unsearchable determination of his infinite wisdom, permits Satan to raise a fresh persecution, much more terrible than any before. This is the persecution of the emperor Dioclesian; in which, as it was to be the *last*, the *Dragon* poured out his utmost venom and rage, as, *knowing that he had but a short time* left him.

V. 13. *And when the Dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man-child.*

And no sooner did this persecution begin to break out, but,

V. 14. *And there were given to the woman two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the desert unto her place; where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.*

Here the *Woman*, or the general body of the Christians, seeing the storm rising, betake themselves again to their former retreats, in the deserts, the catacombs, and other lurking places. And as the violence of this exceeded that of all preceding persecutions, so is the *Woman* furnished with *two wings of a great eagle*, to enable her to fly with more strength and swiftness, that is, she is favoured in her flight with a more special protection and assistance from God: In a similar manner to what the Israelites experienced, when the Almighty saved them from the fury of the Egyptians: *You have seen*, said God to his people, *what I have done to the Egyptians: how I have carried you on the wings of eagles, and have taken you to myself*, Exod. xix. 4. But furthermore, Divine Providence fails not to *nourish* or provide with spiritual and corporal food the Christians in their desolate abodes, where they are obliged to remain for *a time, and times, and half a time*, that is, a year, two years, and half a year, or three years and a

half, the utmost period of any one part of this persecution, which indeed in the whole lasted ten years, from 303 to 313, but with some interruptions.

V. 15. *And the serpent cast out of his mouth, after the woman, water, as it were a river; that he might cause her to be carried away by the river.*

And now the *serpent* or devil, in his full rage against the *Woman*, or Christian Church, resolves to overwhelm her, if possible. For that purpose *he casts out of his mouth after her* a flood or *river of water*; he raises a more cruel and bloody persecution than had ever been known, through the whole Roman empire, actuating the emperors and governors of the provinces with the most implacable rancour and most savage fury against the Christians, who for ten years together had little respite. The persecuting emperors were, Dioclesian, Galerius, Maximian, Maxentius, and Maximinus Daia, some of whom reigned at the same time in different parts of the empire. Dioclesian and Galerius began the persecution in the eastern part of the empire, in 303. It was continued for *three years and a half;* while Maximian carried on the same bloody work in the West. "At this time the whole earth "was harassed and tormented," says Lactantius, "and "three most cruel Beasts," namely, Dioclesian, Galerius, and Maximian, "raged every where, from East "to West, except in Gaul," where Constantius Chlorus governed, and checked very much the violence of the persecution. The Christians were diligently sought for; some were discovered and dragged from their lurking places; and the cruelties and barbarities exercised in this persecution exceed all description. "If I "had a hundred tongues," says again Lactantius, "and "a hundred mouths, I should not be able to recount all "the different torments that were employed against the "Christians." De mort. pers. c. 16. After some respite, the persecution was renewed in Italy by Maxentius, in 308; and it raged most violently in the East under the orders of the emperor Maximinus Daia, the most sanguinary tyrant, as St. Jerome styles him, that ever persecuted the Church. His inhumanity and bar-

barity in torturing the martyrs, surpassed every thing that had been practised before. This bloody scene lasted also about *three years and a half;* and after a short interval of rest, the same implacable tyrant revived it in 312, but the next year he himself miserably perished.

This was a long and severe trial, which it pleased Almighty God in his wisdom to subject his people to; but he had fixed the bounds of it, and now he sends an unexpected relief.

V. 16. *And the earth helped the woman,* says St. John, *and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the river, which the Dragon cast out of his mouth.*

The *woman* was helped by the *earth,* that is, by a Prince of the *earth,* Constantine the Great, who came to her succour, and became the first Christian emperor of Rome. Upon the demise of his father, Constantius Chlorus, who died in Great-Britain, Constantine was there proclaimed emperor, in 306. His first care was, though not yet a Christian, to prohibit all persecution in the western provinces which were under his dominion. He even wrote to his colleagues, the other emperors, advising the same: upon which they suspended the persecution, but soon renewed it. Constantine marched against the tyrant Maxentius, who had declared war against him: but before the encounter, by a special revelation, he erected the standard of the cross at the head of his army, making it his chief ensign. For he saw in the sky a cross of light, with this inscription: "In this shalt thou conquer." And effectually under its auspices, he defeated the tyrant in the neighbourhood of Rome, in the year 312. Maxentius in his flight being drowned in the Tyber, Constantine entered Rome in triumph, and was declared by the senate the first of the emperors. The consequence of this victory, was the restoration of peace to the Christians throughout the whole western Roman empire. Maximinus, in the East, after being vanquished by Licinius, having put an end to his own life, in 313, there remained but two emperors; Constantine, who governed in the West, and Licinius, in the East. They both concurred, though Licinius was a

pagan, to publish an edict that suppressed all persecution in the eastern empire, and granted full liberty to the Christian religion. Thus at last, by human help, under the Divine concurrence and direction, the sunshine of peace was restored to the Church, throughout the whole extent of the Roman dominions. And thus it appears how *the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the river, which the Dragon cast out of his mouth.*

V. 17. *And the Dragon was angry against the woman: and went to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

No wonder the *Dragon*, or Devil, *was angry against the woman*, seeing that, instead of his destroying her, she had defeated him; and that she was now entirely rescued from his power, and under the protection of a prince, upon whom he could have no influence. He was further enraged, to see his own power crushed, his reign of idolatry expiring, his agents, the heathen Roman princes, exterminated, and now Christianity established through the whole empire, that is, through the greater part of the then known world. He had with infinite regret seen himself driven by Constantine from the western boundaries of the empire to its utmost limits in the East. Satan, thus overcome, but still swelling with rage and malice against the *woman*, leaves the Roman dominions, and flies into the kingdom of Persia, there to continue his hellish work, in *making war with the rest of the woman's seed*, the servants of God, *who keep his commandments*, and bear *testimony to Jesus Christ*. There he finds new instruments fit for his purpose, the barbarous heathen kings of that country, whom he soon excites with fury against the *woman's seed*.

A most horrible persecution was set on foot by the cruel tyrant, Sapor II. which raged during forty years, without intermission, from the year 340 to his death, in 380. St. Maruthas, bishop of Tagrit, in Mesopotamia, near the borders of Persia, compiled the acts of many of the martyrs who suffered in this persecution; and the historian Sozomen, speaking of them, says: "It

" would be difficult to give an exact account of them, " to specify their names, their countries, their tor- " ments, and the new-invented cruelties exercised up- " on them: I shall only say, it is assured, that sixteen " thousand men and women suffered, whose names " were known, and so many others, that their number " could not be ascertained." Lib. ii. c. 14. Forty years after, viz. in 420, the persecution was recommenced by king Isdegerdes, and continued under his successors for thirty years. The brutal inhumanity used in torturing the martyrs at this time, is thus described by the historian Theodoret: " Some had the skin " torn off their hands, others off their backs, and others " from their forehead down to the chin. Some had " split reeds tied round them very fast, which being " plucked away with violence, brought the skin along " with them, and occasioned exquisite torment. Some- " times the persecutors dug holes in the earth, which " they stored with rats and mice, then shut up the " Christians in them, after tying their hands and feet, " and left them to be devoured by the vermin. The " enemy of God and man suggested to them several " other more barbarous kinds of torture, which they " employed upon the holy men; but none could shake " their constancy." Lib. v. c. 39.

Chosroes II. king of Persia, was also a bitter enemy to Christianity. When his army took and plundered Jerusalem, in the year 614, many thousands of clerks, monks, nuns, and virgins, were cruelly massacred, ninety thousand Christians were sold for slaves to the Jews, and afterwards many of them were tortured and slain. In the beginning of the year 628, the king ordered sixty-nine Christians to be strangled in one day. But this idolatrous king and tyrant was defeated in several battles by Heraclius, emperor of Constantinople, to whom he had before refused peace, unless the emperor would renounce Jesus Christ, and adore the sun. Chosroes was afterwards put to death, in 628, by his own son, Sireos, who stopped all persecution, and made peace with Heraclius; and within the space of a few years Persia was conquered by the Saracens.

The machinations of Satan, the indefatigable supporter of idolatry, against the Christian Church of Persia, were now quashed, and no room was there left for further attempts by the means of idolatrous princes. Resolving, therefore, to leave that country, Satan steps to the confines of it.

V. 18. *And he stood upon the sand of the sea* *. He stops upon the shore of the Persian sea, probably meditating a flight into some new country, where he may still prosecute his implacable hatred against the *woman's seed*. But behold,

Apoc. Chap. XX. v. 1. *And I saw*, says St. John, *an Angel coming down from Heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand.*

V. 2. *And he laid hold on the Dragon, the old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.*

V. 3. *And he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should no more seduce the nations, till the thousand years be finished. And after that he must be loosed a little time.*

An *angel* descends from *heaven*, who seizes the *Dragon* or *Satan* upon the sea-shore where he *stood*, *binds* him with a *chain*, casts him into the abyss, or *bottomless pit* of hell, and shuts him up there for *a thousand years*; not precisely for that number of years, but for the whole period of his confinement, here expressed in the round number of *a thousand years*; which confinement is to last to the time of Antichrist, in the latter days of the world, when Satan will again be *let loose* for a *little time*.

Here then the Almighty is pleased to put a stop to Satan's power. This happened in the seventh century. His reign had been of long duration, and infinite mischief he had done. He is the *dragon* that drew down with him the *third part of the stars of heaven*, or was the

* In the common Greek text, *And I stood*, &c. but the reading of the Vulgate is confirmed by the Alexandrian manuscript, by the Syriac and Arabic versions, by Tichonius, and *the edition of* Aldus.

chief of the angels that fell, and is their prince in the infernal kingdom. He is here also styled the *Old Serpent*, as being the same that seduced Eve in Paradise, and consequently a murderer from the beginning. This inveterate enemy of God and man *seduces the whole world*, and had done it, by withdrawing the greatest part of mankind from their obedience and duty to God, and bringing them over to himself by setting up the banner of Idolatry. This abominable worship of the Devil had subsisted a long time, but was at last to be suppressed by him who came to enlighten the world, and said: *Now shall the prince of this world*, Satan, *be cast out*, John xii. 31. At the rise therefore of Christianity, Satan, perceiving his kingdom shaken, set all engines to work for the support of idolatry, and to stop the progress of the Gospel: and in this attempt he caused to be *spilt* an ocean of Christian blood. He had been suffered to proceed so far; but now the term decreed by the Almighty is come, and Satan is chained up in prison. From the time of his confinement, idolatry, of which he is the parent and chief supporter, fell, and the Church was freed from those extreme severities of persecution it felt before, and experienced less opposition in extending its faith and doctrine. This may be seen in the history of the Church. From the time even that Satan was forced to retreat from the Roman empire into Persia, the Christian religion made rapid progress in all the provinces of that empire, and stretched gradually into many countries beyond them; till at last its growth became stupendous, and the Church shone, like a bright sun, over the most part of the known world.

Let it be here also observed, that notwithstanding the imprisonment of Satan, prince of the bad angels, we must not conclude that all the devil's power was then superseded. Many of his chief subjects were probably shut up with him, but many also, though of inferior power, were permitted to remain on earth to tempt mankind, and to exercise their virtue.

——St. John proceeds:

V. 4. *And I saw seats: and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them, and the souls of them that*

the Millenarian System; which, instead of having any foundation in the present text, is refuted by it. For St. John here speaks of the happiness of the *souls* only, of those who were beheaded, &c. without hinting the least at the state of their bodies. Whence it appears, that by *the first resurrection* the Apostle understands the glory of Heaven, into which the just enter after their death, and which they will enjoy for *a thousand years*, that is, during the whole course of time to the general resurrection. Besides, the notion of two resurrections of the flesh, or of body and soul, is fully disproved by our Saviour's words: *The hour cometh, wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that have done good things, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment*, John v. 28, 29. Here Christ expresses very clearly but one general resurrection of the good and the wicked together. Hence it is no wonder that the Millenarian opinion fell early into disrepute, and has been long exploded. But as some moderns have endeavoured to revive it, it may be worth while to read the following brief account of its original rise, progress, and decline, in the learned D. Calmet's Comment on this chapter of the Apocalypse.

"The system of the Millenarians owes its origin to "the Jews. They expected to reign a thousand years "with the Messiah on earth, as appears from the fourth "book of Esdras, and from the works of some of their "most famous Rabbins, as Maimonides and Manasse-"Ben-Israel. But he that gave the greatest credit to "that opinion, was Papias, a disciple of St. John the "Evangelist, and companion of St. Polycarp. He pre-"tended to have received the Millenarian doctrine from "the Apostles and their disciples. Upon this assertion "it was adopted by St. Irenæus, St. Justin Martyr, Ter-"tullian, Victorinus, Lactantius, and several others; "while it was on the other hand impugned by others "from the first ages of the Church. And certainly what "Eusebius remarks of the character of Papias, ought to "be sufficient to discredit his authority. He was a man "of very moderate understanding, who, for want of com-

" prehending what he heard from the Apostles, took " literally what was said in a mystical sense. St. Dio- " nysius of Alexandria, in the third century, expressly " refuted one Nepos, who had composed a book in de- " fence of the Millenarian opinion. And Caius, a Priest " of the Church of Rome, in the second century, calls it " a fable invented by Cerinthus. Origen also rejects it " in several places of his works.—In fine, we may con- " clude with a very able man, M. du Pin, Dissert. sur " les Millenaires, who has fully discussed the question, " that the Millenarian sentiment is contrary to the Gos- " pel, to the doctrine of St. Paul, and is not at all found- " ed in the Apocalypse."

To conclude this part of our present history: the reader may remark, that the events, which took their rise in the first age of the Church, have been here carried on in a continued series, because connected, far beyond the period of that age, which terminates about the year 320. And in general it must be observed, that the transactions relating to the Church are not confined within the compass of that age which gives them birth, and which they serve to characterize, but continue and extend into the subsequent ages.

CHAPTER IV.

The History of the Second Age of the Christian Church.

The Opening of the Second Seal.

APOC. Chap. VI. v. 3. *And when he had opened the Second Seal, I heard,* says St. John, *the second living creature, saying, Come and see:*

V. 4. *And there went out another horse,* that was *red: and to him that sat thereon, it was given that he should take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another, and a great sword was given to him.*

Here is announced the heresy of Arianism, the rise of which opens the Second Age of the Church, about the year 320.

He *who sits on the horse* is the Heresiarch Arius; and his *horse is red,* or according to the Greek expression, of a fiery colour, agreeing with the character of heresy, which always kindles a flame of discord and violence. *To him,* the rider, *it was given that he should take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another.* Constantine the Great had procured peace to the Church, in 313, by suppressing the Roman Idolatrous power, as we have before seen; but this *peace* is soon banished by intestine broils, occasioned by Arius broaching, in 319, a new doctrine, which impiously denied the Divinity of Christ our redeemer. This blasphemous doctrine, in progress of time, raised such a flame of contention among the Christians, that there ensued commotions, tumults, violences, and bloodshed. *A great sword was given him,* to Arius and the Arians, who were supported by the great powers of the earth, as by several Roman emperors, and by several kings of the Goths, the Vandals, &c. who employed the sword in defence of the Arian doctrine, and cruelly persecuted the Catho-

lic Christians.——This explication will be elucidated presently by an historical account of that heresy.

The whole drift of the Arian doctrine being to impugn the divine nature of Christ: in opposition to it was ascribed to the *Lamb* the attribute of *Divinity*, or *Riches*, according to the Greek text, Apoc. v. 12. see p. 18; that is, the *Riches* of the Godhead, which he shares equally with the Father; for *in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead corporally*, Coloss. ii. 9: and Christ speaking to God the Father, says: *all my things are thine; and thine are mine*, John xvii. 10.

Let it be remarked, that at the opening of the second Seal, *the second living creature*, which, as we have before shown, represents the Prophet Jeremias, says to St. John, *come, and see.* This invitation comes with propriety from that prophet, who being a priest, here shows to St. John the apostasy of Arius, a priest of the Christian Church. Besides! Jeremias was sent by Almighty God against the false Prophets, who deluded the Jews by their pernicious counsels and deceitful promises; see Jer. c. 23. In a similiar manner he here points out Arius, a false Teacher in the Christian Church.

The Sounding of the Second Trumpet.

Apoc. Chap. VIII. v. 8. *And the second Angel sounded the trumpet: and as it were a great mountain, burning with fire, was cast into the sea, and the third part of the sea became blood.*

V. 9. *And the third part of those creatures died, which had life in the sea, and the third part of the ships were destroyed.*

In the Seal we saw the intestine convulsions and violences occasioned by the Arian disputes; here we find described by an expressive allegory, the spiritual mischief done by that same Heresy. And thus the second Seal and second Trumpet announce to us distinctly and seperately the two dismal effects, temporal and spiritual, of Arianism. *A great mountain, burning with fire*, or a great Heresy, tending to kindle among Christians the *fire* of discord in their principles of Faith, and the flame of mutual animosity, *is cast into the sea*, that is, is

published in the Church, which it embroils, and which therefore is now represented as a troubled *sea*. And *the third part of the sea becomes blood*, by which change its waters become poisonous to the fish that live in them: and in like manner the Catholic doctrine, on which the Faithful live, is corrupted by Arianism through *a third part* of the Church, and becomes poisonous and destructive. The consequence of which is, *the third part of those creatures die, which have life in the sea*, or *the third part* nearly of the Christians drink the heretical poison, and die a spiritual death. And even *the third part of the ships were destroyed*, that is, a *third part* of the particular Churches entire with their Pastors, meant here by the *ships*, imbibe the same poison, and perish.

The natural consequences of Heresy are, Disputes and Contentions in the Church; and therefore we find ascribed to it *voices* or noises, Apoc. viii. 5. see p. 24.

The pouring out of the Second Vial of the wrath of God.

Apoc. Chap. XVI. v. 3. *And the second Angel*, says St. John, *poured out his Vial upon the sea, and there came blood as it were of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.*

As at the sounding of the second Trumpet a fiery Mountain was thrown into the *sea*, or among the Christians; so here the second Vial of God's wrath is also poured out upon the *sea*, or on the corrupted and guilty part of the Christians, namely, the Arian heretics. And *there came blood as it were of a dead man:* On pouring out the Vial follows the Divine Judgment. There appears *blood* like that of a *dead man*, or *blood*, which after having flowed with a free and vigorous circulation during the time of health, gradually retards its motion in a dying man, is totally lost and stopped when the man is dead. Thus the Arians, after having subsisted for a while in a vigorous condition and powerful state, are condemned by a just judgment to decline, dwindle, and die away. Hence, *every living soul died in the sea;* the Arians were, in course of time, either destroyed or converted to the Catholic faith, and the Heresy extinguished. Such was their case.

The preceding Explication illustrated by a short Account of the Rise, Progress, and Decline of Arianism.

By the accession of Constantine to the Imperial Throne, Idolatry received a deadly blow, and the Christian religion was established and peaceably practised throughout the whole Roman Empire from the year 313. The blessing of so happy a condition was more than could be expected by the Christians to last long, since Christ had fixed that his disciples should follow him, not by a life of ease and prosperity, but through the thorny road of tribulation. Their present situation was too flattering, not to raise the envy of their ever-watchful and implacable enemy, the Devil. "He," to use the words of St. Cyprian, "seeing his idols fallen "into disrepute, and his temples deserted, on account "of the number of converts to Christianity, invented a "new artifice, to deceive the unweary under the dis-"guise of the Christian name itself: this was Heresy "and Schism, which he employed as his instruments to "subvert faith, corrupt truth, and dissolve unity. Those "that he could not keep in the old dark road of idolatry, "he deceived by leading them into the by-path of er-"ror." Lib. de Unit. Eccl. Arius, a turbulent ambitious Priest of Alexandria in Egypt, aspired to that see; but finding himself disappointed by the election of St. Alexander, his jealousy and resentment stimulated him to decry the doctrine of this holy prelate, which was true and orthodox, and to oppose to it a new system of doctrine of his own invention. He began to teach that Christ was not God, but a created being, formed indeed before all other creatures, but not from eternity. Arius had a graceful mien, and a modest deportment: he was old, and had a mortified countenance: these qualities gave him credit, and contributed to gain him proselytes.

The holy bishop Alexander at first endeavoured to reclaim him by mild remonstrances and entreaties: but these not availing, and his pernicious doctrine gaining ground, Alexander assembled a synod of the bishops of Egypt and Lybia, in which Arius and his abettors were

condemned and cut off from the communion of the faithful, in the year 320. Of this proceeding St. Alexander gave account by a circular letter to all the bishops of the Church. Arius fled from Alexandria into Palestine; there he procured protection from some bishops: from thence he proceeded to Nicomedia, where he met with a favourable reception from its bishop Eusebius, who became a warm friend to him, and his principal patron. But the Heresiarch was not content with having gained over to his party some of the bishops; he invented a scheme to propagate his tenets among the vulgar class of people. He composed songs, which he taught them to sing, and in them he mixed the poison of his doctrine, which by that easy means they unwarily sucked in.

Constantine the Emperor, in order to put a stop to the unhappy disputes that divided the Church, wrote letters to Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, and to Arius, exhorting them to be reconciled. But this expedient proving ineffectual, and the divisions increasing, at the solicitation of the bishops he willingly concurred in procuring a general council of the Church to be held. The place pitched upon for it was Nice, in Bithynia, and the emperor generously defrayed the whole charges of the clergy, who resorted thither from all parts of the world, to the number of 318, in the year 325. St. Sylvester Pope, not being able to go himself to the council, commissioned Osius, bishop of Corduba, in Spain, to preside there in his name, and sent him two priests, Vitus and Vincentius, for assistants. Arius was there present, and had two and twenty bishops of his party. Constantine made a short speech to the fathers, in which, among other things, he said: "Let us "take care, that, after having crushed, by the help of "God our Saviour, the tyranny of those who waged "war against him, the devil by his jealousy does not "expose the gospel to the slander and malevolence of "the wicked, by this intestine war which I see rise up "in the Church." The fathers then called upon Arius to explain his doctrine, which shocked them very much. He and his partisans were soon confounded,

and in the debate St. Athanasius distinguished himself by force of argument in defence of the Catholic faith. In fine, the Arian doctrine was proscribed, and Jesus Christ declared to be truly God, consubstantial or having the same eternal substance with the Father, and that the Father is in him, and he in the Father. In consequence of this determination, they drew up a profession of the Catholic faith, which is called the Nicene Creed, to which all subscribed, except a few Arian bishops. These, with Arius, and his other adherents, were anathematized by the council, and banished by Constantine.

In this manner the Catholic faith was ascertained, and triumphed over its enemies: but the spirit of heresy, which is always restless, could not be quelled. The Arians, though every way confounded, instead of yielding, employed themselves in raising fresh troubles. They wrote to the emperor, and, by pretending to admit the Nicene faith, they got themselves recalled from banishment; they then set themselves to poison the emperor's mind by different arts, by slanders, and calumnies against the Catholic bishops, and prevailed upon him to banish some of them, among whom was St. Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria. But not stopping there, they concerted a scheme to get Arius received into the Church, even in the imperial city of Constantinople, and in presence of the emperor, who then resided there, in 336. For that purpose they insinuated to Constantine, that Arius was become orthodox in his doctrine, and they requested he might be called to Constantinople. This being granted, and Arius arrived in the city, the emperor sent for him, and asked him if he received the Nicene Faith: the heresiarch answered in the affirmative, and presented to the emperor a written profession of faith, in appearance not different from that of Nice, but conceived in artful and ambiguous terms. The emperor, supposing him sincere, desired Alexander, bishop of Constantinople, to receive him into the Catholic communion. The holy prelate remonstrated pathetically against such a dangerous and uncanonical step, but Arius's friends were clamorous, and

insisted on the emperor's desire being complied with. The bishop retired immediately into the Church, prostrated himself before the altar, and in his fervent prayer thus addressed Almighty God: "Lord, if Arius "must be received into the Church, be pleased to take "me out of the world; but if you have compassion on "your Church, as I know you have, permit not your "inheritance to become an object of contempt." Next morning Arius's friends assembled, and resolved to conduct him to Church, in spite of the bishop. They were leading him, as in triumph, through the streets, when on a sudden finding himself pressed by a necessity of nature he retired into a back place to ease himself; but there with his excrements he voided his bowels, and was found dead. Thus was the hand of God visible upon Arius.

This ambitious apostate and proud heresiarch had *taken peace from the earth*, had disturbed the Church of Christ, and created a fatal division among the Christians. "The Church was in a flourishing condition," says the historian Eusebius, speaking of the rise of Arianism, "and the faithful employed themselves in "all kinds of holy exercises with comfort and joy: nor "was there the least danger to be feared from any fo-"reign enemy. But a secret jealousy unhappily crept "in. It first insinuated itself into the minds of the "people, then found its way into the assemblies of the "bishops, whom it animated against one another, by "raising disputes and altercations among them con-"cerning the Christian doctrine. This small begin-"ning gave rise to a great flame, which first broke out "at Alexandria," having been there kindled by Arius. De vita Const. lib. 2. c. 61.

Constantine the Great, dying in 337, left three sons, who divided the empire according to their father's directions. Constantine, the eldest, had Spain, Gaul, and all the provinces on this side of the Alps. Constantius, the second son, had Thrace, Asia, Egypt, and the eastern countries: and Constans, the youngest, had Italy, Sicily, Africa, except Egypt, Greece, and Illyricum. Constantius was soon gained over by the Arians,

and his family was chiefly composed of them. From his palace the infection diffused itself, first into private families, and by degrees was propagated into the towns and even distant provinces under his dominion. Many bishops imbibed the contagion, and communicated it to their flocks. This great accession of number increased the Arian power, which they did not fail to exert in persecuting the orthodox Christians. They gave great trouble to St. Athanasius, by the calumnies they invented against him, and they intruded into his see of Alexandria, by force of arms, a bishop of their own party in his place. When St. Alexander, bishop of Constantinople, died in 340, Paul, a true Catholic, was chosen his successor, but the Arian faction deposed him, with the agreement of the emperor Constantius, and substituted in his room the arch-Arian Eusebius, of Nicomedia. From that date the Arians were masters in Constantinople for forty years. They carried on every thing by violence in the East: Relying on the protection of the emperor Constantius, they arrogated the power of deposing at their pleasure the orthodox prelates, and filling their places with Arians.

By all these different means, Arianism had very much diffused itself through the East, while the West was but little tainted with it. This produced great disunion in the Church; which occasioned a council to be held at Sardica, in Illyricum, in 347. It was composed of about 250 bishops, convened from both the Eastern and Western provinces, of whom 170 were orthodox, and fourscore of the Arian party. Several of the bishops, and others, there showed the wounds they had received from the swords of the Arians; they complained of the cruel hardships they had been made to suffer, under which some had even perished; they gave account of the violences committed by the soldiers and people, and of the threats of the judges: they represented that the virgins were stripped of their substance, the holy ministers imprisoned, and the Churches burned. These, and other persecutions, that had been carried on by the Arians, they recapitulated before the council. The Arian party expected to domi-

He renewed the scenes of bloodshed and violence, but two years after, by a just judgment, was massacred by the pagans for his cruelty.

Constantius, the emperor, died in 361, and with his death ceased for a while the Arian persecution. What has been said of this prince sufficiently shows that he was a *great sword*, according to the expression of the Apocalypse, in the hands of the Arians. In 364, Valens was invested with the empire of the East by his brother Valentinian, who kept to himself the West. This last prince was a true Catholic; but Valens was inclined to Arianism, and openly declared in favour of it in 367, when he was baptized by Eudoxus, the Arian bishop of Constantinople, who made him then swear, that he would always persist in his belief, and persecute those of a contrary persuasion. In conformity to his oath, this emperor became another *great sword* in defence of the Arians. The devil not being able, as Paulus Orosius observes, lib. vii. c. 29, to persecute the Church any longer by pagan emperors, who no longer existed, found means to do it by the hands of Christian emperors. Valens began his persecution against the orthodox, by ordering the governors of the provinces to banish those bishops who had been deposed by Constantius, and had recovered their sees under Julian. St. Athanasius, among the rest, underwent the penalty, and this was the fourth or fifth time he had been driven from his Church. The Catholics at Constantinople suffered greatly; they were insulted, wounded, and imprisoned, and some of them even put to death. To get a stop put to these violences, they sent a deputation of fourscore ecclesiastics to Valens, at Nicomedia. These, instead of obtaining any redress from the inhuman emperor, were ordered to be put on board a vessel, and the vessel, when out at sea, to be set on fire. The barbarous order was executed, and they all perished. Persecution was openly carried on in different parts of the East. As the monks in the deserts were known to distinguish themselves in supporting the true religion, Valens issued out an order that they should be compelled to bear arms, and the officers who were

sent upon the commission, massacred a great number of them.

The emperor Valens perished miserably in 378, and he being the last of the Roman emperors that favoured Arianism, it lost ground in the eastern provinces, which were chiefly infected. And before the end of this century, that is, before the year 400, the Arians began to differ among themselves about their tenets; they divided into different sects, and these divisions contributed to weaken their strength, and were even the occasion of many of them leaving their party, and embracing the Catholic faith.

On another side, however, one may take notice, that the empress Justina, who favoured the Arians, gave some trouble to the Catholics in the west, particularly to St. Ambrose at Milan; and she prevailed upon her young son Valentinian II. to issue out an edict in support of the Arians, but as she died soon after, it produced but little effect.

The Goths also, who from idolatry had been converted to Christianity, were afterwards brought over to Arianism, about the year 376, by their bishop Ulphilas, who suffered himself to be perverted by Eudoxius, the Arian bishop of Constantinople. These Goths, having overthrown the western empire of Rome, divided themselves into two bodies, one of which settled in Italy, and they were called Ostrogoths, or Eastern Goths; the other proceeded into the southern parts of France, and afterwards into Spain, where they fixed, and were named Visigoths, or Western Goths. The Ostrogoths were converted by degrees to the Catholic faith, after their dominion in Italy was extinguished by Narses, the commander of the emperor Justinian's troops, who defeated their army and slew their king Totila in 552. The Visigoths in Spain, under their king Reccared, who had been instructed by St. Hermenegild, were brought over from Arianism to the Orthodox Faith, about the year 587. The Suevi, a German people who settled in Spain, had been also converted a few years before from the Arian heresy: In fine, in this king's reign an end was put to that heresy in Spain, where

it had been imported by the barbarous nations that invaded that country.

The Lombards, originally a German people, who conquered part of Italy, and raised to themselves a kingdom there in 572, were also Arians; but Charlemagne vanquished them in 774, and put an end to their dominion. The remainder of them were in course of time converted.

The Vandals were not only Arians, but cruel persecutors of the Catholic Church. In a peace they made with the Roman Emperor in 435, was ceded to them a large tract of country in Africa, into which a considerable body of them passed from Spain, where they had been settled before. Two years after Genseric their king resolved to establish Arianism in his new African kingdom, and in that view began to persecute the Catholic bishops, and to banish them from their sees. He afterwards forbid ordaining any Catholic bishops in his dominions, so that they were reduced in thirty years time to three. In 455 the persecution was so hot, that it crowned many with martyrdom, and their Memorial is celebrated by the Church on the 5th of April. The Arians were actuated with such rage and animosity, that they committed the most outrageous indignities: knowing that the Catholics were assembled at the holy Communion, they broke in upon them, threw down the sacred body and blood of Christ, and trampled it under their feet.

Huneric, son and successor to Genseric, in 477, was, like his father, an Arian, but surpassed him in his barbarous treatment of the orthodox. He seemed to have more the nature of a Decius or a Dioclesian, than of a Christian prince. We shall only say in general, that he shut up all the Catholic Churches in his dominions, he banished the bishops and clergy to the number of near five thousand, and very numerous were the victims sacrificed to his cruelty, in this persecution, some of whom lost their limbs, others their lives, for their adherence to the true faith. But the hand of God overtook him in 485, and he died eaten up with worms. Two other persecutions were afterwards raised against the

Catholics by Huneric's successors, Gondamund and Thrasimund. But the emperor Justinian in 535 sent his general Belisarius into Africa, who defeated the Vandals, and put an end to their kingdom and power.

Let this account suffice to show, with how much propriety the Arian heresy is styled in our text of the Apocalypse a *great mountain burning with fire* flung into the Church. It now appears what a flame it kindled of discord, intestine convulsions, and persecution, and that it corrupted the faith of a considerable part, both of its pastors and people. But we must at the same time take notice that, notwithstanding all the different artifices and violences employed by the Arians to increase their party, and to suppress that of the orthodox, the greatest portion of the flock of Christ, even in the East, stood firm in their faith, and adhered closely to the determination of the Council of Nice. This is attested by St. Athanasius, who lived in the midst of the scene, and bore a great share in it. The same is asserted by St. Basil, in the time of the emperor Valens. Besides! the Western Church was for a considerable time almost unanimous in its detestation of that blasphemous heresy, till it was imported thither by foreign people, who came and settled in her countries. It is said that the *fiery mountain* corrupted a part of the waters of the sea; in like manner Arianism infused its infection into some part of the Church; but as the waters of the sea, by their natural convulsive motion, cast forth the filth they contain in their bosom, and purify themselves; so the pastors and community of the faithful, as soon as they perceived the lurking poison of Arianism, bestirred themselves to repel it, by assembling councils, by preaching, praying, &c. which efforts had their full effect, and defeated the enemy. The mighty power of emperors and kings came in to its assistance, but that even fell before infirm defenceless men, the faithful pastors, who stood intrepid against it; for, *the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the strong*, 1 Cor. 1. 27. How vain and senseless the attempt, in any power below heaven, to *force* the Church to change her belief! when he, who built her up, had pronounced that *the*

gates of hell should never prevail against her, Matt. xvi. 18. How is it possible that the Church should ever be prevailed upon to declare against the divinity of Christ, which is the very *rock* on which she stands? The rise of Arianism, therefore, served only as a touchstone, to distinguish the sound part of Christians from the unsound. It was an useful instrument to separate the chaff from the corn: *There must be heresies*, says St. Paul, *that they who are approved, may be made manifest*, 1 Cor. xi. 19. This method Christ made use of to purge away all dross from his Church, and the pure metal only remaining, she shone with more brightness. While on the other hand Arianism, not being able to stand against such superior lustre, withdrew by degrees, and sunk quite away.

Such is the history of what relates to the second age of the Church.

CHAPTER V.

The History of the Third Age of the Christian Church.

The Opening of the third Seal.

APOC. Chap. VI. v. 5. *And when he*, the Lamb, *had opened the third seal, I heard*, says St. John, *the third living creature, saying: Come, and see. And behold, a black horse, and he that sat on him, had a pair of scales in his hand.*

V. 6. *And I heard as it were a voice in the midst of the four living creatures, saying: Two pounds of wheat for a penny, and thrice two pounds of barley for a penny, and see thou hurt not the wine and the oil.*

Here is announced a dreadful famine, which is the first step taken by the Almighty for the destruction of the empire of pagan Rome; and with it commences the third age of the Church, about the year 406.

The *voice* cries out: *Two pounds of wheat for a penny, and thrice two pounds of barley for a penny.* The Roman penny, or *denarius*, is, in our money, about seven pence three farthings, an exorbitant price in those days for two pounds of wheat or six pounds of barley, and shows great scarcity. This famine afflicted the western Roman empire in 406, and the following years, when Arcadius reigned emperor in the east, and Honorius in the west; the body of the Roman empire having been divided into two states; the eastern, the capital of which was Constantinople; and the western, having Rome for its capital; which last is the subject of our present consideration. The famine was occasioned by the irruption of those barbarous nations, the Goths, the Vandals, the Huns, the Alans, &c. who came in swarms from the north, invaded the Roman provinces, and carried

devastation along with them. This is attested by all the historians of those times. These people were sent by Almighty God to execute his avenging justice on idolatrous Rome and its empire, to distress it with calamities, to seize its provinces, to humble its pride, and put an end to its power and dominion.

The *black* colour of the *horse* is suitable to the nature of famine, which wastes and dries the body, and tinges the skin with a blackish hue, agreeably to that of Jeremias: *Our skin is burnt as an oven, by reason of the violence of the famine*, Lamen. v. 10. The *black* or funeral colour of the horse agrees also with the condition here considered of the heathen Roman empire, which is now going into destruction. And *he that sits* on the horse, is Alaric, king of the Goths, the principal nation among those that concurred in the subversion of the Roman state: and in Alaric may be comprehended the chiefs of the other nations. The rider holds *a pair of scales in his hand* to weigh the grain, which indicates that the dearth will be so great, that all grain will be sold by exact weight and measure. And here we may take notice of the propriety of this spectacle being shown to St. John by the *third living creature*, or the prophet Ezekiel, who had announced to the Jews the like calamity, with which God intended to punish them. Thus spoke God by that prophet: *Behold, I will break in pieces the staff of bread in Jerusalem; and they shall eat bread by weight, and with care; and they shall drink water by measure, and in distress*, Ezek. iv. 16. Let us also observe, that the *voice* which spoke, came from *the midst of the four living creatures*, that is, it was one voice composed of the voices of the four living creatures, or of the four great prophets, Isaias, Jeremias, Ezekiel, and Daniel. They severally foretold the fall of ancient Babylon, which was a figure of the fall of pagan Rome, this city being styled Babylon in the Apocalypse. On account therefore of their common prediction, their voices are joined in one to announce the approaching fate of Rome. But it is added: *Hurt not the wine and the oil.* This expression seems to point at the character of the invaders of the Roman territory, who were all Northern

people, and consequently not being used to *wine* and *oil*, which are not produced in their countries, naturally neglected them, while at the same time they swept away all the grain. In northern countries, at present, both wine and oil are imported, and commonly used, but it was not so in those days, when little or no commerce, or even communication, subsisted between the northern and southern nations.

In the subject of this seal, we see shine forth that *Wisdom*, the attribute of the *Lamb*, Apoc. v. 12. see p. 18, according to the dictates of which he demolishes kingdoms and raises up others.

The sounding of the Third Trumpet.

Apoc. Chap. VIII. v. 10. *And the third Angel*, says St. John, *sounded the trumpet, and a great star fell from heaven, burning as it were a torch, and it fell on the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters.*

V. 11. *And the name of the star is called wormwood. And the third part of the waters became wormwood: and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.*

Here is an allegorical description of new calamities that were to be inflicted on heathen Rome and its provinces. *A great star falls from heaven:* this *great star* represents the above-named powerful nations of the North; it falls *from heaven;* they are sent by Almighty God to destroy Rome, as formerly Nabuchodonoser was sent to destroy Jerusalem, and Cyrus to destroy Babylon. This *star is said to burn* like a *torch*, on account of the desolation which these barbarians spread in their progress, by laying waste the cities and country by fire. The *star* fell on the *third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters.* Those people spread themselves over a *third part* of the Roman provinces, signified by the *rivers;* they invaded particularly the western parts; then fell upon Rome itself and Italy, denoted by the *fountains of waters.* That the *rivers* and *waters* signify the provinces of the Roman empire, appears from the explication given by the Angel to St. John, in chap. xvii. ver. 15, of the Apoca-

lypse. *The waters which thou sawest, where the harlot sitteth, are peoples, and nations, and tongues.* Furthermore, *the name of the star is wormwood;* the *star* may well be called *wormwood*, since it caused such bitter distresses, such bitter calamities, and, in fine, ruin, to the Roman people. The same kind of expression for calamities, sent by the hand of God, we find in the prophet Jeremias: *Behold*, said the Lord, *I will feed this people*, the Jews, *with wormwood, and will give them water of gall to drink*, Jerem. ix. 15. Lastly, *the third part of the waters became wormwood: and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter:* a great number of the Romans perished by the bitter draught of those calamities.

The disasters, and devastations by fire, that afflicted the Roman dominions at this time, may therefore very justly be compared to the effects of *lightning*, Apoc. viii. 5. See p. 25.

But here we must observe, that this third trumpet sounded not only war and ruin to the pagan Roman empire, but also a terrible alarm to the Christians in it, as they became involved in those general calamities, and suffered extremely. Besides, they had lived for some time with comfort under Christian emperors, and shared their benevolence and protection; but this blessing also was now wrested from them by the northern invaders, who superseded the western Roman emperors, and seizing their provinces, set up there their own princes, who were either idolaters or Arians. Nay, even history informs us, that about the year 480 there was not one Catholic king in the world. Odoacer, who reigned over Italy, was an Arian; the same were the kings in Spain, and Genseric, in Africa. The different princes in Gaul or France were also either heathens or Arians. In the East, reigned the emperor Zeno, an abettor of the Eutychian heresy; and the kings of Persia were pagans.

The Pouring out of the third Vial of the wrath of God.

Apoc. Chap. XVI. v. 4. *And the third Angel*, says

St. John, *poured out his Vial upon the rivers and the fountains of waters: and there was made blood.*

V. 5. *And I heard the Angel of the waters, saying: Thou art just, O Lord, who art, and who wast, the holy one, because thou hast judged these things:*

V. 6. *For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink: for they are worthy.*

V. 7. *And I heard another from the altar, saying: Yea, O Lord God Almighty, true and just are thy judgments.*

At the sounding of the third trumpet, the great star fell upon *the rivers and the fountains of waters:* so likewise the third Vial of the wrath of God is here poured out on *the rivers and the fountains of waters*, that is, on the pagans of the western Roman provinces, and on those of Italy and Rome itself. And *there was made blood:* This is the last stroke, that of the sword, employed by the Almighty to complete the overthrow of the Roman empire; and effectually dreadful was the slaughter the barbarians made of the pagan Roman people. The Divine judgment being executed, the justice of it is immediately proclaimed by the *Angel of the waters*, that is, by the angel that presided over the Roman state. He cries out: *Thou art just, O Lord, who art, and who wast, the holy one, because thou hast judged these things;* and the reason is added: *For they have shed the blood of Saints and Prophets, and* therefore *thou hast given them blood to drink: for they are worthy*, or deserve it: they, the Romans, have exercised the most cruel persecutions against thy people, the Christians; they have *spilt* their blood, and that of thy Apostles and ministers of thy gospel: and now, by a just retaliation, thou hast given them blood to drink, by bringing upon them other people, as cruel as themselves, to pour out their blood. Then the angel, who presides over the *altar* of Holocausts, at the foot of which, according to the Jewish rites, was poured out the blood of the victims, joins agreeably to his function in acknowledging the Divine justice in the effusion of Roman *blood*. He addresses the Almighty, saying: *Yea,*

O Lord God Almighty, true and just are thy judgments. We may here take notice, that the above-mentioned calamities are very plainly intimated in few terms by our prophet, in chap. xviii. v. 8, of the Apocalypse, where, speaking of the punishment of heathen Rome, he says: *Her plagues shall come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; famine* being the subject of the present Seal, *mourning* that of the Trumpet, and *death* that of the Vial.

Such are the events which characterize the third age of the Church, and make up its history.

The preceding explication illustrated by a brief Historical Account of the fall of Ancient Rome, with its Empire.

The Roman empire, like all other human structures, was built upon a perishable foundation. It had its rise and its decline. In its first ages, it supported itself by wisdom and moderation, and owed its amazing growth to its prowess, fortitude, and perseverance: but in the latter part of its period, which we here consider, these qualities were no more found in it. Its progress was like that of an elegant human shape, which had reached maturity of perfection, but whose beauty was now in the wane. The prophet Daniel had, long before its existence, described its nature. He compares it first to iron, Dan. ii. 20, &c. As iron is the strongest of metals, so the Roman state was to perform greater achievments than any of the preceding empires, and was to subdue them all. Then he compares it to iron mixed with clay. The mixture of iron and clay exhibits the subsequent decline of that state, clay being put for a sign of its weakness and want of solidity. Such then was the nature of the Roman state. We see it therefore extending its dominion, and gaining universal empire, during the time of its consuls and first emperors: but after that period, we see it distracted with interior convulsions and civil wars. The military grew licentious, the patricians luxurious and effeminate, the plebeians mutinous, and the emperors cruel and debauched. Hence it is plain, its constitution was growing old, and was tending to a decay,

from its own infirmities and disorders. But though its case seemed almost desperate, a tolerable recovery might have been hoped for from active and valiant governors, who might have reformed its defects, and revived in the people a share of the spirit and bravery of their ancestors. But this was not to be. Rome had provoked the indignation of the Supreme Ruler of empires. It had bent its whole power to the supporting of idolatry, and to the suppressing of the establishment of the Christian religion. An invisible hand therefore was already depressing it, and it was doomed to drink the full cup of the wrath of the Almighty, and even in the most conspicuous manner.

Many were the instruments employed by the hand of God for this purpose. He brought down upon the empire a multitude of barbarous nations, which, being almost destitute of humanity, tore out its bowels without mercy. Among these the Goths bore a principal share. They were originally a people of Gothland, in Sweden, where, finding themselves too closely confined for their number, a large body of them passed into Pomerania, where Tacitus places them: thence they advanced to the neighbourhood of Palus Mæotis; and afterwards bent their route westerly, and extended themselves along the north side of the Danube. From thence they made incursions into the Roman empire, carrying famine and desolation along with them. The emperors, harassed with wars on every side, were compelled to come into terms with them, and allowed to part of them a settlement in Thrace. In consideration of this indulgence, they remained quiet for a while, and even assisted the Romans against their other enemies. But new pretences of complaint soon rising, they made new incursions, and were of all the northern nations the most troublesome to the Romans.

Alaric, whom they chose for their king, an enterprising ambitious adventurer, animated with the success of former invasions, conceived a design, in the year 402, of seizing on the beautiful fertile country of Italy, and attacking Rome itself. Claudian, the Roman poet, who

lived at that time, in his book on the Gothic war, introduces Alaric speaking thus:

——————— Per tot populos urbesque cucurri.
Fregi Alpes galeisque Padum victricibus hausi:
Quid restat nisi Roma mihi?

"I have run over," says Alaric, "so many countries "and cities, I have crossed the Alps and the river Po, "carrying every where victory with my arms: what "then remains for me to conquer, but Rome itself?"

Alaric entered Italy in 402, at the head of his Arian Goths, Honorius being then emperor in the West, and Arcadius in the East, but was defeated in two different battles, near Pollentia and Verona, by Stilico, Honorius's general, and was compelled to retire out of Italy into Dalmatia. This victory was celebrated by the above-mentioned poet, who being a pagan, boasted much of the pretended special protection given by the pagan deities on this occasion to Rome. Thus speaks he:

Hanc urbem insano nullus qui marte petivit,
Lætatus violasse redit. Nec Numina sedem destituunt.
Lib. de bello Get.

"No one," says he, "has presumed to attack Rome, "that has not returned from it confounded at his own "folly and madness. For the Gods cease not to protect "their seat."

Claudian, when he wrote this, was little aware of what was to follow, and it is doubtful whether he lived to see the sacking of Rome by the same Alaric, which happened within a few years after.

In the year 406, Radagaisus, another Gothic prince, a pagan, assembled together an immense army of Goths, and other barbarous people, inhabiting the north side of the Rhine and Danube, (some say four hundred thousand men,) and advanced into Italy under pretence of revenging the slaughter of their countrymen made at Pollentia and Verona. All Italy and Rome itself were thrown into the utmost consternation. The heathens,

who were still numerous in the city, though their idols had been taken away by the emperor's order, in 399, raised an uproar, saying, that Radagaisus would certainly prevail, on account of his devotion to the Gods, and Rome had lost their protection by neglecting their worship. St. Austin, who was then at Carthage, was informed of these things, and mentions the pagans of the city of Rome making their complaint in the following manner: "We offer no more sacrifices to the Gods, "while Radagaisus sacrifices to them every day. What "can we then expect, but to fall into the hands of this "barbarous, but religious prince?" De civ. Dei. lib. 5, c. 23. To these complaints they added blasphemies against the name of Christ. That great army advanced as far as Florence, where Stilico, at the head of the Roman legions, assisted by a body of Huns and Alans, fell suddenly upon it, and entirely routed it. Radagaisus himself was soon after taken by the Romans and put to death, and his whole army perished. Thus Almighty God would not suffer, as St. Austin remarks, that a pagan prince should be the executor of his justice, lest the idolatrous people of Rome should ascribe his success to the false Gods he adored.

At the end of the year 406, three different nations of the north joined their arms together, the Vandals from the north of Germany, the Suevi, also from Germany, and the Alans, a people of Sarmatia or Poland; and having passed the Rhine, they spread themselves through the Roman provinces of Gaul. They sacked the towns, they plundered the country, they put to death many Christians, and carried desolation and slaughter wherever they went. These were soon followed by another swarm from Germany, composed of Burgundions, Franks, Saxons, and others: so that the whole country of Gaul, or France, was overspread with barbarians. St. Jerome, who lived at that time, thus describes these irruptions: "A multitude of barbarous nati-"ons have possessed themselves of all Gaul. The Qua-"di, the Vandals, the Sarmatians, the Alans, the Gepidi, "the Heruli, the Saxons, the Burgundions, the Alemanni,

" and the Pannonians*, have laid waste the whole coun-
" try between the Alps and the Pyrenees, between the
" ocean and the Rhine." Epist. xi. ad. Ager. He goes on with specifying the deplorable devastations and massacres committed by this shoal of savages. The author of a poem on Providence, who bore a share in these calamities, says, that " if the ocean itself had *broke* through
" its bounds, and overflowed all Gaul, it could not have
" done more mischief." It appears then that the people of the western part of the empire were compelled to swallow a full draught of *wormwood*, and would have been glad to purchase *two pounds of wheat for a* Roman *penny*, or at an excessive price.

Alaric, after his retreat, as we have seen, into Dalmatia, agreed to assist the emperor Honorius with his troops against the enemies of Rome: but when the work was done, he could not obtain from the emperor the reward he thought due for his services. Upon this disappointment he in 408 invaded Italy, at the head of his army. It was upon this occasion, as the historians Socrates and Sizomen relate, that a holy hermit met him, and exhorted him to spare Rome, and not bring upon himself the guilt of so much blood and destruction; to whom Alaric made this answer: " I constantly feel
" an impulse within me, that gives me no rest, but
" presses me to go and destroy that city." He pillaged the country as he went, pitched his camp in the neighbourhood of Rome, and besieged it. This occasioned a *famine* to rage in that city; the famine gave birth to a plague which carried off numbers of people. In this extremity, the Senate of Rome offered him a large sum of money, with such other advantageous proposals, that he thought fit to desist from his enterprise, and retired into Tuscany.

During these times, inexpressible were the devastations and barbarities, committed in different parts of the empire, by numerous invaders, the northern wolves, as

* By the Pannonians St. Jerome seems to understand the Huns, and the Suevi by the Alemanni.

St. Jerome styles them. Thus speaks he: "It shocks "me to relate the miseries of our present times. For "twenty years past and more, from Constantinople to "the Julian Alps, we see the Roman *blood* every day "*spilt*. Scythia, Thracia, Macedonia, Dardania, Da- "cia, Thessalonica, Achaia, Epirus, Dalmatia, and all "the Pannonias, are plundered and laid waste by the "Goths, the Sarmatians, the Quadi, the Alans, the "Huns, the Vandals, and the Marcomans. How ma- "ny matrons, virgins, and persons of noble birth, have "been abused by these beasts! The bishops are carried "into captivity, the priests and others of the clergy "murdered. The Churches are thrown down, horses "tied to the altars of Christ, and the ashes of the mar- "tyrs are dug up from their tombs. Every where "groans and lamentations; every where death appears "in various shapes. The whole Roman empire is "tumbling." Epist. 3. ad Heliod.

In 409, the next year after his retiring into Tuscany, Alaric, impatient that some articles of the treaty made with him were not fulfilled, complained to Honorius, but met with a repulse. Enraged at this usage, he assembled his troops, and marched towards Rome. The emperor to oppose him took into pay ten thousand Huns, and sent Valens with six thousand men to reinforce the garrison of Rome: but this officer fell into an ambush laid for him, and all his men were either killed or taken. Alaric advanced to Rome, and laid close siege to it.

And now the time approached, which the Almighty had fixed, for delivering that city into the hands of Alaric. *The day of destruction is at hand, and the time makes haste to come*, Deut. xxxii. 35. The Pagans were still numerous there, and averse to Christianity. May we not then interrupt, for a moment, the thread of our narrative, and consider the Almighty as making the same challenge to these Pagans, which he formerly did to those who obstructed the establishment of the Jews? *Where are your Gods, in whom you trust?——Let them arise and help you, and protect you in your distress. See ye, that I alone am, and there is no other God besides me.—If*

I shall whet my sword as the lightning, and my hand take hold on judgment, I will return vengeance on my enemies, and repay them that hate me. I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh. Deuteron. xxxii. 37, &c.

While Alaric lay before Rome, Heraclian, Governor of Africa for the emperor Honorius, being informed of the siege, forbade all provisions being sent from Africa to the city of Rome, which used to be chiefly supplied from thence. This caused a *famine*, which raged to a degree that had never been felt before. "Rome," says St. Jerome, "perished by famine, before it perished by "the sword. Such was the force of hunger, that they "fed upon the most execrable meats; the people tore "one another to pieces to devour their flesh, and mo-"thers did not even spare the infants at their breasts, "inhumanly eating up what they had lately brought "into the world." Epist. 16. ad. princip. At length, Alaric availing himself of this distress, assaulted the town, and took it. This happened in the year 410. Thus Rome, that proud city, the mistress of the world, which had subsisted eleven hundred and sixty years, had raised to herself the greatest empire that had ever existed, fell a prey to an obscure Goth, who could scarce be said to be master of a foot of land. Rome was now exposed to the rage of a barbarous exasperated enemy. Therefore, *wo to thee, O city that plunders, shalt not thou thyself be also plundered?* Isai. xxxiii. 1. The soldiers were allowed to plunder every thing, and to carry off the immense riches, which had been amassed there, and were the spoils of all the countries of the world. In consequence of such unbounded liberty being granted, shocking were the barbarities committed by the soldiers to extort from the inhabitants their treasures. They not only plundered, but slaughtered the inhabitants on all sides. That renowned people, that had given laws to all mankind, were now become the prey *of fire* and the *sword*. The number of the dead was so great, that they lay unburied; and St. Jerome tell us, that Rome was buried in its own ashes. The august palace of the emperors, and the greatest part of the so much admired

elegant buildings were consumed by the flames. The historian Procopius even says, the conflagration was such, that there scarce remained one single house *intire*. In a word, Rome perished by the four greatest plagues that can afflict the human species, famine, pestilence, sword, and fire.

Here then appears conspicuous the judgment of God upon ancient Rome, and how the Roman people, conformably to our text, *were drenched with their own blood*, in consequence of their forefathers having shed in their persecutions *the blood of his Saints*. Here also we see fulfilled that prophecy of Daniel, where, speaking of the fourth beast, which represented Rome with its dominion, he says: *I saw that the Beast was slain, and that its body was destroyed, and given to the fire to be burnt*, Dan. vii. 11.

The fall of Rome was equally an object of surprise and sorrow to many nations, on account of the extraordinary figure it had made in the world. St Jerome, who was then at Bethlehem, and learned the whole account from some Christians who had escaped out of the dismal scene and come to him, laments the dreadful fate of that ancient and powerful city, and describes it by the following verses, with which Virgil described the conflagration and destruction of Troy.

Quis cladem illius noctis, quis funera fando
Explicet, aut possit lacrymis æquare labores?
Urbs antiqua fuit, multos dominata per annos,
Plurima perque vias sternuntur inertia passim
Corpora, perque domos, et plurima mortis imago.
Æneid. lib. 2.

What tongue can tell the slaughter of that night?
What eyes can weep the sorrows and affright?
An ancient and imperial city falls,
The streets are filled with frequent funerals:
All parts resound with tumults, plaints, and fears,
And grisly death in sundry shapes appears.
Dryden's Transl.

We shall beg leave to add one verse more out of the same poem:

Venit summa dies et ineluctabile tempus.

The fatal day, th' appointed hour is come.

It is however to be observed, that in this terrible calamity and severe judgment of heaven, Almighty God showed a peculiar regard to his own people. For Alaric had ordered that the two Churches of St. Peter and St. Paul, should be places of refuge, and that whoever retired there should be safe. The Christians therefore fled thither, and with them some also of the Pagans, who by that means sustained no hurt.

For three days, the city lay under the tyranny of the Goths; who then leaving it, passed into the provinces of Campania, Lucania, and Calabria, wasting the country, and loading themselves with the spoils of it. But being arrived at Consentia, a town of Calabria, as if the Almighty chose to drop the rod of justice he had made use of; there Alaric sickened and died in a few days. Athaulph, his successor, made peace with the emperor, and obtained for himself and his Goths, a settlement in the southern parts of France.

But the anger of God was not yet assuaged. The Vandals, the Alans, and the Suevi, not content with having ravaged Gaul, had passed the Pyrenean mountains in 409, and entering Spain, another province of the empire, defeated the Roman armies there. The calamities caused by these savage people in that country were most dreadful. Besides the destruction made by the *sword*, the *famine* became so excessive, that many did not scruple to eat human flesh, and even mothers murdered their own children to feed upon them. To these miseries was also added the plague, which carried off multitudes; and the wild beasts, accustomed to human flesh from the number of carcasses that had perished by the sword, famine, and plague, assaulted even the living, and devoured them. This account we have from Idatius, a bishop of Spain in that century. The three above-mentioned barbarous nations, after the reduction of the country, in 411, divided its provinces among themselves, and settled there.

Attila, king of the Huns, a Pagan people of Scythia,

now Tartary, broke into different provinces of the empire with a prodigious army, called himself the "scourge of God," and answered that name by his devastations and barbarities, destroying all before him by *fire* and *sword*. He was feared as a more fierce and savage barbarian, than either Alaric or Radagaisus. In the year 451 he invaded Gaul, and was there beat by the Roman army, assisted by the Goths, Alans, Franks, and Burgundions. Upon his defeat he retired into Pannonia, which became the seat of the Huns, part of that country being called from them Hungaria. Attila having reinforced his army, marched into Italy, where he spread destruction. As he advanced in his career, he was met by St. Leo Pope, who addressed him with so much energy, eloquence, and dignity, that the barbarian let himself be persuaded to retire out of Italy.

The Vandals had got footing in Africa from the year 427, and afterwards a fixed settlement there by agreement with the emperor. In 455, Genseric, their king, was invited into Italy by the empress Eudoxia, through a disgust she had taken to Maximus her husband, who forced her to marry him. Genseric had accepted with pleasure the invitation, and landed in Italy with an army of Vandals and Moors. Maximus, who had usurped the empire, fled; and Genseric entering Rome without opposition, delivered it up to his soldiers, who pillaged it for fourteen days, and then set fire to it. Genseric left the place loaded with riches, and at his return into Africa, seized upon the whole remains of the Roman dominions there.

Odoacer, king of the Heruli, a people of that part of Germany now called Mecklenburgh, invaded Italy in the year 476 with a powerful army. He defeated the Roman troops under the command of Orestes, took the city of Pavia by force, and exposed it to the pillage of his soldiers, who destroyed all with *fire* and *sword*. Here Odoacer was saluted king of Italy. He then advanced to Rome, where he deposed the emperor Augustulus, and thus effectually established his own regal title.

In Augustulus ceased the Roman empire in the west.

The imperial title was now lost, the authority of Rome was extinguished, its dignity trampled under foot, and its extensive domain torn to pieces, and parcelled out among a set of barbarous people. Spain was divided among the Goths, Alans, Suevi, and others. Africa was possessed by the Vandals. Britain, having been before abandoned by the Romans, was subdued by the Saxons, who had lately assisted the Britons against their enemies, the Scots and the Picts. The Goths, Burgundions, and Francs, had erected their several kingdoms in Gaul; and now at last Rome itself, with Italy, *the fountains of waters*, that had triumphed over the rest of the world, became enslaved to a barbarous king. In these latter times Italy, by the ravages of the invaders, had been depopulated, and the imperial armies had consisted chiefly of barbarians, as Goths, Huns, Alans, Heruli, Suevi, and others, hired under the name of auxiliaries. These soon saw their own strength, and the weakness of their masters. They therefore shared out to themselves such morsels of the empire as they most relished.

Theodoric, king of those Goths that were settled in Italy, got Odoacer treacherously murdered in 493, and himself proclaimed king of all Italy. This country from that time remained under the power of the Goths, till Justinian the Great, emperor of Constantinople, sent thither his general Belisarius, who subdued a considerable part of it, reduced the Gothic power to a low ebb, and united Rome to the eastern empire. Thus was that unhappy city tossed from hand to hand, and now become a member of that empire, of which she had formerly been the head. However, Totila being chosen king of the Goths in Italy, found means to retrieve the declining state of their affairs. He recovered a great part of the country, and in 546 invested Rome, which he blocked up so closely, that it could receive no provisions. This occasioned such a raging *famine*, that the inhabitants were reduced to the utmost extremity of distress, feeding upon the most filthy things, even their own excrements. Belisarius attempted to send in provisions, but the attempt proved unsuccessful. The arm of God

was still lifted up against Rome, and was to strike another blow, before the divine justice could be finally satisfied. By a piece of treachery in the sentinels posted at one of the gates, Totila was admitted in the night into the city, which he gave up to the pillage of his soldiers. The Goths spent several days in plundering the inhabitants; and the senators and richest people were even *strift* of every thing, that they were necessitated to beg their bread of the very Goths who had thus reduced them. The walls of Rome were thrown down, the public monuments demolished, the city was burnt, and Totila carried away with him all the inhabitants; so that the place remained desert for above forty days. Procop. lib. 3. c. 12. lib. 4. c. 13. and Evagr. lib. 2. c. 7.—Thus was completed the destruction of ancient Rome.

CHAPTER VI.

A further account of the Third Age.

HAVING in the preceding chapter elucidated by plain history, the brief enigmatical description of the fall of the Roman empire, which St. John gives us in the third seal, trumpet, and vial: we are now better prepared to understand the other, more explicit account, he has added in the 17th and 18th chapters of the Apocalypse. The event is so interesting to the Christian Church, that he enlarges on the circumstances of it, particularly on the ruin of Rome herself, as she had been the greatest enemy of Christ upon earth, the instrument of Satan in opposing the worship of God, and, in fine, the centre of idolatry.—Thus speaks our prophet:

APOC. Chap. XVII. v. 1. *And there came one of the seven Angels, who had the seven Vials, and spoke with me, saying, Come, I will show thee the condemnation of the great harlot, who sitteth upon many waters.*

V. 2. *With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication: and they who inhabit the earth, have been made drunk with the wine of her whoredom.*

V. 3. *And he took me away in spirit into the desert. And I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.*

V. 4. *And the woman was clothed round about with purple and scarlet, and gilt with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of the abomination and filthiness of her fornication.*

V. 5. *And on her forehead a name was written; a mystery: Babylon the great, the mother of the fornications, and the abomination of the earth.*

V. 6. *And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And*

I wondered, when I had seen her, with very great admiration.

St. John is here invited, ver. 1, to be a spectator of the divine punishment upon the *great harlot*, who represents pagan Rome, as we shall see presently. The invitation comes with propriety from *one of the seven Angels* who held the *vials* of the wrath of God, as it was the function of those angels to execute the divine judgments on mankind. The apostle is, therefore, *taken up*, as he thought, by the angel, v. 3, into a *desert*, that very desert where Rome stood. The country round that metropolis of the world, was filled with towns and inhabitants, while she maintained her power, but when the barbarous nations came upon her like furious lions, they laid waste the lands all around for many miles; they razed the towns to the ground, and thus reduced the whole country to a desolate desert. In this condition it was when Rome was destroyed, and thus nearly it has remained ever since, as a lasting monument of the divine wrath. St. John being placed in this desert, sees the *great harlot*, or the *woman, sitting upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns*, &c. and being struck with amazement at so extraordinary a sight,

V. 7. *The Angel said to me: why dost thou wonder? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast which carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns;* which the Angel does by parts thus:

V. 18. *The woman which thou sawest, is the great city, which hath kingdom over the kings of the earth.*

This *great city*, which has dominion *over the kings of the earth*, can be no other but imperial Rome, which had conquered almost all the kingdoms of the known world. Imperial heathen Rome, is, therefore, evidently meant and represented by the *Woman* or *great Harlot*. And thus it has been understood by the ancient fathers and by the modern interpreters of the Catholic Church.—But furthermore,

V. 15. *And he*, the angel, *said to me*, says St. John:

the waters which thou sawest, where the harlot sitteth, are peoples *, *and nations, and tongues.*

The harlot was said, v. 1, to *sit upon many waters*, which the angel here interprets to represent the many kingdoms, states, and countries, over which she ruled. Again, the angel tells him, that *the seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth*, v. 9, which is to say clearly, the seven mountains on which ancient Rome was built. These hills are, the Capitoline, Palatine, Aventine, Cælius, Esquiline, Quirinal, Viminal, some of which can scarce be deemed a part of modern Rome, as being now very little inhabited.

The *woman* being now well known, we are next presented with a description of her person and qualities. She appears dressed *in purple and scarlet, and gilt with gold and precious stones and pearls*, v. 4; the imperial lady is thus decked out in the most sumptuous manner; proudly displaying the great abundance of her riches, amassed from the spoils of the whole world. *Purple* was the usual robe of the emperors of Rome, and the *Scarlet* shows her stained with the blood of the martyrs. She holds in her hand *a golden cup, full of the abomination and filthiness of her fornication*, v. 4, a common scriptural expression for the abominations of idolatry; and with these she had notoriously polluted herself. For Rome, not content with worshipping her own heathenish gods, she adopted those of all the countries and nations she subdued. She thought by this extravagant religious worship to render all the deities propitious to her, and to this she ascribed the success of her arms. "Thus it is," said the Romans, "that this city has ex-"tended her empire beyond the rising and setting sun, "and beyond the bounds of the ocean, because she vene-"rates the gods she conquers, she makes foreign deities "her own, and even raises altars to those that are un-"known to her." Min. Fel. Oct. In this manner

* In the Greek text, *peoples and multitudes.*

were her idolatrous *abominations* so multiplied, that there are said to have been 420 heathenish temples in that city. Thus writes a Roman Poet:

Sed quæ de septem totum circumspicit orbem
Montibus, Imperii, Roma, Deumque locus.
Ovid. lib. 1. Trist.

" Rome, which from seven mountains overlooks the whole
" world,
" Is the centre of empire, and the abode of the Gods."

She even carried her superstition so far, lest any unknown god should not receive due worship, as to build a temple, which she dedicated to all the deities, calling it on that account Pantheon, " the temple of all the gods." " This city," said St. Leo, " not knowing the author of " her elevation, while she ruled over almost all the na- " tions of the earth, she submitted to serve all their " gods: and she imagined herself to be the more reli- " gious, as she rejected no kind of idolatrous worship." " ——Insomuch, that whatever superstitions had place " in other countries, they were all carefully transplanted " to Rome." Hom. 1. in Nat. Ap. Petri et Pauli. In fine, such was the *filthiness of her fornication*, such the excess of her prostitution to idolatry, that she even deified her impious emperors, raised statues to them to which incense was offered, and *built* temples to their memories.

Such was ancient Rome, the *great harlot, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication; and they who inhabited the earth, were made drunk with the wine of her whoredom*, v. 2. She was not only intoxicated herself with all the delusions of idolatry, but she offered her *golden cup* all around to others. The unparalleled degree of power and grandeur, to which she was elevated, raised her to such an height of admiration in the eyes of all nations, that they viewed her with the utmost deference and respect, and readily embraced whatever superstition she herself followed or recommended. She had moreover the disposal of kingdoms, governments, riches, and dignities: what wonder then, if with such

charms she debauched the *kings* and *people of the earth?*

This same *woman* is further said to carry on her forehead the following inscription: *A mystery: Babylon the great, the mother of the fornications, and the abominations of the earth*, v. 5. Here is *a mystery*, or an enigma, to be unravelled, viz. *Babylon the great the mother of the fornications, and the abominations of the earth.* The reader, we apprehend, is already prepared in great measure for the solving of this enigma. *Babylon the great*, is the great imperial city of pagan Rome. And she is the *woman*, as we have just above shown, who is *the mother of the fornications and abominations of the earth.* This is the explanation of the proposed *mystery.* But to make it more clear, that by *Babylon the great*, is here meant idolatrous Rome, we appeal to the angel's words: *The woman which thou sawest is the great city, which hath kingdom over the kings of the earth*, v. 18; which, as we have before observed, plainly points out the great ancient city of Rome, that domineered over the greatest part of the kingdoms of the then known world. The *woman* therefore is the image of that city, and in the inscription on her forehead she is styled *Babylon the great:* consequently *Babylon the great*, is here the same with the city of Rome. In the primitive ages this figurative name of *Babylon* was frequently given to heathen Rome by the Christians, on account of the resemblance of the characters of those two cities, for their idolatry, and for their oppressing, the one the Jews, the other the Christians. St. Peter dates his first letter from Babylon, 1 Pet. v. 13, that is, from Rome, as St. Jerome and Eusebius tell us. "The appellation of Babylon," said Tertulian, "is used by St. John for the city of Rome, "because she resembles ancient Babylon, in the extent "of her walls, in her haughtiness on account of her do- "minion, and in persecuting the saints." Lib. adv. Jud. "Rome is a second Babylon," says also St. Austin, "and "a daughter of the ancient Babylon." De Civit. lib. 22. c. 18. *Babylon the great*, is therefore sufficiently distinguished: but her character is completed, and she appears in plain colours, in what follows: *And I saw*,

says St. John, *the woman drunk with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus*, v. 6. This inhuman *woman*, this impious Jezabel, this cruel persecutrix, has drenched herself with so much Christian *blood*, which she has *spilt*, that she appears to be *drunk* with it. Who is this but idolatrous persecuting Rome? Innumerable were the *martyrs* she put to death, throughout the vast extent of her dominions, and even in her own bosom, the city itself. Innumerable, likewise, were the other *saints*, or holy confessors, who, though not slain, were by her condemned to lose some of their limbs, and had an eye bored out, their tongues plucked away, or the sinews of a leg or a thigh cut, &c. or in fine, were put to tortures, that tore away their flesh, and drained their *blood*. We have seen the account of ten dreadful persecutions, which swept away an infinite multitude of Christians; and all these persecutions were the work of the Roman emperors, and their substitutes in the provinces. It is then apparent who the *woman* is, that was seen *drunk with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus*.

After the description of the woman, we are then favoured with an account of the *Beast that carries her*, v. 7. The woman being the image of the city of Rome, the *Beast* on which she sits, naturally represents the Roman empire. And as the *woman* was styled the *mother of fornication* or idolatry, consequently Rome was the seat and centre of idolatry; and in like manner by the *beast* the Roman empire is represented as the empire of idolatry. The colour of the beast is *scarlet*, v. 3, an emblem of its sanguinary disposition: and it is said to be *full of names of blasphemy*, or marked over with the names of the heathenish Roman gods, the greatest indignity that can be offered to the majesty of the Supreme Being.——Then the angel, who promised to St. John to discover to him, v. 7, the *mystery* both of the *woman* and the *beast*, tells him:

V. 8. *The beast which thou sawest, was, and is not, and shall come up out of the bottomless pit, and go into destruction: and the inhabitants on the earth, (whose names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of*

as the empire of idolatry, but is changed into
tian empire ; which happened when Constan
Great became emperor, suppressed the power
try, expelled Satan, and established Christianit
it is added, *and the beast shall come up out of the*
less pit, and go into destruction : the Roman id
empire will rise up again under Antichrist, fi
bottomless pit, or hell, because Satan will be lo
fore the end of the world, and will revive
chiefly by means of that wicked man Antichr
will become master of the ancient Roman do
And the inhabitants on the earth shall wonder, se
beast, that was, and is not, and yet is ; all the w
be struck with amazement, at seeing the idolat
man empire re-appear, which had been so l
destroyed. But the reign of Antichrist will soo
to destruction, as it will last no more than thr
and a half. This last period of the *beast* will
fully explained in its due place.——The an
ceeds in his explication :

V. 9. *And here is the understanding, that h*
dom†. The seven heads are seven mountains, upo
the woman sitteth, and they are seven kings.

V. 10. *Five are fallen, one is, and the other i*
come : and when he is come, he must remain a sh

particularly distinguished, as the chief supporters of idolatry, and the most virulent persecutors of the Christian religion. These are, as we have already remarked, Nero, Domitian, Severus, Decius, Valerian, Dioclesian, and Antichrist. *Five are fallen:* we saw, before, the successive periods of the *beast* with regard to its existence; here we have the succession of its *heads*. *Five* of them *are* fallen, or gone, namely, Nero, Domitian, Severus, Decius, and Valerian, by whom the idolatrous empire was supported for a time; *one is*, the sixth, or last of that period, viz. Dioclesian, with whom the reign of idolatry falls: and so it happened, by the accession of Constantine to the imperial throne. Here then is interrupted the succession of the heathen and persecuting emperors for a long space of time; for *the other is not yet come*, the seventh Roman emperor, Antichrist, who will come only in the latter days; *and when he is come, he must remain a short time*, three years and a half, as we shall see in the sequel. No notice is here taken of Julian the apostate, who broke indeed the series of the Christian emperors, and attempted to re-establish idolatry, but was taken off after a short reign of less than two years.——The angel continues:

V. 11. *And the beast, which was, and is not, the same also is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into destruction.*

Here is a new state of the *beast*, which begins at the fall of the sixth *head*, or Dioclesian, with whom the *beast* itself, or the power of idolatry, also fell. On this account the former simple appellation of *the beast*, is now changed into *the beast, which was, and is not*, as being now no more what it was, having lost all power, and that power being transferred into the hands of Christian emperors. In this situation the *beast* is said to be an *eighth king;* that is, the Roman idolatrous people, though left without a heathen prince at their head by the death of Dioclesian, and succession of Constantine, are nevertheless to be reputed equivalent to an eighth pagan emperor, because they retain still their former attachment to paganism, and their hatred to Christianity. And thus they are *of the seven*, as being alike in their dispositions to the seven above-mentioned

heathen emperors. But they *go into destruction;* this idolatrous people will soon disappear, as we shall see, either by being destroyed, or by their conversion to the Christian religion.

After the account of the *beast* and its *seven heads*, the angel proceeds to explain to St. John the meaning of the *ten horns* of the beast.

V. 12. *And the ten horns, which thou sawest, are ten kings, which have not yet received kingdom, but shall receive power as kings one hour after the beast*.*

V. 13. *These have one design: and their strength and power they shall deliver to the beast.*

The *ten horns* denote then *ten kings*, or ten powers, namely, the Goths, Huns, Alans, Vandals, Saxons, Burgundions, Franks, Heruli, Suevi, and Quadi, the chief of the barbarous nations that invaded the western Roman empire in the fifth century. These *have not yet received kingdom* or dominion, viz. at the beginning of this period of the Christian emperors, or of *the beast that was and is not;* but *they will receive power as kings one hour with the beast*, that they will be commanded by their own chiefs, and will engage by treaty to serve for *one hour*, or a while, as auxiliaries to the *beast*, that is, to the pagan Roman armies. Thus the prophet continues to describe the succession of the changes that were to happen in the Roman empire. The above-mentioned nations come all with *one design*, of relinquishing their own barren northern countries, and settling themselves in the rich provinces of the Roman empire. But before they accomplish this *design*, *their strength and power they shall deliver to the beast:* they effectually served as auxiliaries to the Roman armies, according to agreement, and helped to defend the empire against its enemies; as we have seen in the history above given. In this quality they served under the emperors Constantius, Valens, Theodosius, Honorius, &c.

V. 14. *These shall fight with the lamb, and the lamb shall overcome them: because he is Lord of lords, and*

* In the Greek, *with the Beast*, and so read St. Iræneus and others.

King of kings; and they that are with him, are called, and elect, and faithful.

All those different people, signified by the *ten horns*, were either Pagans or Heretics. Being therefore bitter enemies to the Catholic Christians, they in their irruptions wreaked their malice and rancour upon them: they plundered their towns and country, and destroyed them with fire and sword. (See the history above given.) And thus these barbarous people, *fought against the lamb*, or Christ, but *the lamb will overcome them*, in turning their hearts, and converting them into his votaries. And in effect, some time after they had settled themselves in the Roman provinces, a part of them were destroyed in the wars that ensued, and the rest gradually abjured their idolatry and errors, the Pagans becoming Christians, and the Arians and other heretics going over to the Catholics. Among other writers, thus speaks Orosius, an historian of that age: "Who "knows but providence thus permitted the barbarians "to become masters of the Roman provinces, with a "view to effect their salvation? Don't we see that the "churches of Christ, both in the eastern and western "parts, are filled with Huns, with Suevi, with Vandals, "with Burgundions, and with divers other people, who "have been converted to the faith." Such was the victory of the *Lamb*; for Christ is *Lord of lords, and King of kings:* he is sovereign over all kingdoms and states: he is master of the human mind, and he can call to the faith whom he pleases. To work the conversion of those people, he employed his servants, the ministers of his church, whom he *called* to that function, and *elected* them, or culled them out of the whole body of his people for that purpose, and they approved themselves *faithful* to their charge. Incredible indeed was the zeal exerted by the Church in those times for the conversion of the above-mentioned pagans and heretics. To mention only a few instances: St. Remigius and others converted the Gauls in the fifth and sixth centuries. The Arian Visigoths in Spain were brought over to the Catholic faith about the year 600, in the reign of their king Reccared. About the same time the Saxons

in Britain received the Christian doctrine from St. Austin and his companions. St. Willibrord carried the faith into Friseland; and St. Rupert, and St. Boniface, with his associates, converted many nations of Germany in the seventh and eighth centuries.

V. 16. *And the ten horns, which thou sawest on the beast*, continues the angel: *these shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall burn her with fire.*

Here we see the general disposition of the above-mentioned northern nations, denoted by the *ten horns*. They *will hate* the *harlot*, Rome, the great capital of the empire, because she has shown herself an universal domineering tyrant, and has in particular ill requited them for the important help they had lent her against her enemies. Thus stimulated with rancour and resentment, they *will make her desolate*, that is, they will invest her walls, they will preclude all succours both of men and provisions from her, and reduce her to the utmost state of distress. They *will make her naked*, by stripping her of her shining ornaments, her gaudy palaces, Egyptian obelisks, magnificent temples, theatres, triumphal arches, &c. and all her ostentatious pageantry. They *will eat her flesh*, by plundering her of her wealth and riches, with which she had fed herself by plundering the rest of the world. And lastly, they *will burn her with fire*. All which was done, as we have seen in the history above given *.—Thus was foretold by the angel, before it happened, the fate of that heathen imperial city, under the emblem of a *woman*, prostituted to vice, and admitting no control, because she is the empress of the world. But her jealous enemies will not rest, till they have found means to humble her pride, and to effect her ruin. They will first deprive her of every human succour and comfort; they will then strip her naked, devour her flesh, and when thus reduced to a skeleton, they will consume her by fire.

* Whoever has been upon the place, has seen sufficient proof of the same, in the miserable shattered ruins of Old Rome.

That the greatest power on earth, should be thus reduced and crushed by foreign barbarians, whom it had before held in contempt and neglect, may seem strange to our understanding, and not according to the standard by which we generally measure human events. But this extraordinary fact is not to be ranked in the class of common human transactions: it was conducted by another hand:

V. 17. *For God hath given into their hearts, to do that which pleaseth him: that they give their kingdom to the beast, till the words of God be fulfilled.*

Under the divine direction therefore those barbarians acted in the demolition of Rome and its empire; and thus they executed what *pleased him*, or what he had designed. According to the decrees of his infinite wisdom and justice, the Almighty sent Nebuchodonosor to punish the guilty Jews, and Cyrus to do the same to the Babylonians. In like manner the northern nations became the instrument of his vengeance upon the Roman state for the guilt of its idolatry and persecutions. These agents had indeed no other view in what they did, than to gratify their hatred, their avarice, and other passions; and this the Almighty permitted them to compass, but for other purposes which they did not see into. But besides! in that latter period, when, agreeable to the prediction in ver. 12, they *had received kingdom*, that is, when they had possessed themselves of the Roman provinces, and erected them into so many kingdoms, they were still allowed to *give their kingdom*, or join their power and armies, with those of the *beast* which was and is not, that is, with the pagan Romans then governed by Christian emperors: the view of which union was the defence of the country against new invaders. This was permitted for a while, *till the words of God were fulfilled*, till the time pre-ordained by God was come, for the final destruction of pagan Rome, and the rise of new Christian Rome in its place, and for the happy conversion of these barbarians, and the remainder of the pagan Romans, to the faith of Christ.

We have now seen, in the course of this 17th chapter of the Apocalypse, the different changes that succes-

sively happened in the western Roman empire, to its total dissolution. We saw ancient Rome in its glorious state, commanding all nations, upholding idolatry with its whole power, and opposing and persecuting the Christian religion. This power is then lost, by passing into the hands of Christian emperors: and this was the first step towards the fall of the empire of idolatry. The body of the people still retaining their former attachment to paganism and aversion to Christianity, the next step was: the Almighty brought down upon them swarms of northern barbarous people, whom the empire was forced to admit into its bowels, and to avert its own ruin for a while, by buying them off and hiring their service against other such like enemies. But these northern savages retaining all along their first hostile disposition against the Romans, found pretences to turn their arms against them, defeated their troops, shared out the western provinces among themselves, and thus overturned the body of the empire. When in possession of the Roman territories, they then, for their own interest and upon their own bottom, employed their forces in conjunction with those of the Roman people in defence of the country. But they could not rest satisfied, till they had attacked and demolished the head, that overbearing mistress of the world, the city of Rome itself——This demolition was announced above, in ver. 16, as to be; and in what follows we see it actually executed.

Apoc. Chap. XVIII. v. 1. *And after these things I saw*, says St. John, *another angel come down from heaven, having great power: and the earth was enlightened with his glory.*

V. 2. *And he cried out with a strong voice, saying: Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen: and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every unclean spirit, and the hold of every unclean and hateful bird:*

V. 3. *Because all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication: and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her: and the merchants of the earth have been made rich by the power of her delicacies.*

Here appears an *angel* descending *from heaven*, vested with *great power*, because he comes to destroy the great imperial city of Rome. He is also surrounded with a *glorious* circle of *light*, which *illuminates the earth*; an image of the majesty of God, who exercises his sovereign dominion in so striking a manner on this occasion. The heavenly messenger *cries out with a strong voice*, that all the earth may hear: and indeed all the earth heard of the fall of Rome, and confessed the hand that did it. He thus cries out: *Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen:* idolatrous Rome *is fallen*. The angel struck her, and she *is fallen*. That mighty seat of power and dominion *is fallen*. That Metropolis of nations, that capital of the world, *is fallen*. That great school of heroes, and parent of conquest, *is fallen* and crushed. The long fixed abode of voluptuousness and luxury, *for the merchants of the earth have been made rich by the power of her delicacies*, is laid waste by famine and devastation. She had provoked the Almighty by her unbounded attachment to idolatry, and by her efforts to support and propagate it; for *all nations** *had drunk of the wine of the wrath*, or vehemence, *of her fornication: and the kings of the earth had committed fornication with her*; and now the hand of God has struck her. She had glutted herself with the blood of the servants of God: and he in his wrath has sent against her the executors of his justice, who have made her *desolate*, have *stript her naked*, have *eat her flesh*, and *burned her with fire*, Apoc. xvii. 16. See p. 112. We have seen how all this was gradually executed upon her. Alaric took the city, plundered it for three days, and burned it, in 410. Genseric plundered it for fourteen days together in 455, and then set fire to it. Odoacer took it in 476, deposed the emperor, and extinguished the imperial title. Lastly, Totila in 546 burned it, and reduced it into a solitude: "Totila," says the historian Procopius, "left not one "human creature in the city." Lib. 3. de bell. Goth. And in this condition it remained for upwards of forty days. And thus it became like an accursed place, given

* In the Greek, *all the nations*, subject to the Roman empire.

up for an *habitation of devils*, and a *hold of every unclean spirit*, or of frightful spectres and ghosts, and a *hold of every unclean and hateful bird*, as of owls, ravens, vultures, &c.

V. 4. *And I heard*, pursues St. John, *another voice from heaven, saying: Go out from her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues.*

The people of God, that is, the Christians, are here told to leave the falling city, lest they should *be partakers of her sins, and receive of her plagues*, that is, lest they should be involved in the punishment and ruin she has drawn upon herself by her iniquities. At the time of Alaric's sacking Rome, many fled away, as we saw in the history, to St. Jerome, who was then in Judæa. Others fled into other parts, as the same holy father testifies. He also informs us, Ep. 7, that St. Paula, and several illustrious Christian families, had before left Rome, as by a particular inspiration, and retired to Bethlehem, in Judæa. "The holy Pope Innocent," says Orosius, "was withdrawn by a particular Provi-" dence out of the city, as Lot out of Sodom, that he " might not see the ruin of a guilty people." Lib. 7. c. 39. We read that St. Melania, as if she foresaw the approaching catastrophe, had prevailed upon many Christians to retire with her from a city doomed to destruction. Hist. Laus. c. 118. In fine, when the storm burst, the Christians that remained there, took refuge in the churches of St. Peter and St. Paul, which Alaric had allowed to be places of safety. Thus then, as the Christians, had formerly avoided being involved in the ruin of Jerusalem by retiring out of it, conformably to our Saviour's admonition, so here, many withdrew in the same manner from the scene of divine vengeance, which so deservedly fell upon Rome.

V. 5. *For her sins have reached unto heaven, and the Lord has remembered her iniquities.*

Her *iniquities* have called to *heaven* for vengeance, and God will bear with them no longer.

V. 6. *Render to her as she hath also rendered to you: and double unto her double according to her works: in the*

cup wherein she hath mingled, mingle ye double unto her.

V. 7. *As much as she hath glorified herself, and lived in delicacies, so much torment and sorrow give ye to her.*

It is not to be understood, that the Almighty here tells the Christians to take revenge on their enemies, the pagan Romans; but by this kind of prophetic language he apprises them, that Rome shall be drenched with a full *cup* of misery, *double* of that she had tyrannically forced upon them. And in proportion as she had proudly exalted herself, and lived in *delicacies*, or luxury and pleasure, so shall be the measure of her *torments and sorrows.*

V. 7. *Because she saith in her heart; I sit a queen, and am no widow, and sorrow I shall not see.*

V. 8. *Therefore shall her plagues come in one day; death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be burnt with fire: because God is strong, who shall judge her.*

Here we have a picture of the intolerable arrogance and pride of the *Woman*, imperial Rome. She says in her heart: *I sit* upon my throne as a *queen;* I am empress of the world. *I am no widow;* my power is fixed and established for ever. *And sorrow I shall never see;* as no one can wrest my power from me, I am beyond the reach of sorrow and affliction. That such were the sentiments of haughty Rome, we learn from the Roman authors themselves. Thus the poet Virgil introduces Jupiter promising unlimited and eternal dominion to the Romans:

> His ego nec metas rerum, nec tempora pono,
> Imperium sine sine dedi. Æneid. I.
>
> To them, no bounds of empire I assign,
> Nor term of years to their immortal line.
> Dryden's Transl.

Horace speaks in the same strain. Carm. sæc. Florus also writes, that "the Gods had promised, the Roman State should remain unshaken and eternal." In Tarq. Superb. Ammianus Marcellinus, in his history, calls Rome "eternal, to last as long as the race of mankind."

For such extravagant presumption, which flies in the face of the Supreme Creator and Lord of the Universe, he pronounces the following *plagues* or calamities *shall come* upon her together *in one day: famine*, which was announced in the third Seal; *mourning*, as described in the third trumpet, and *death*, or the sword, as denounced by the third vial; and her fate shall be completed by *fire*, which shall lay her in ashes. All these calamities fell at once upon heathen Rome, as we have seen. They came from an all-powerful and irresistible hand, which threw her down from her throne, and reduced her to extreme pangs of sorrow and affliction, and then crushed her, for her intolerable pride and impiety: for *God is strong who judges her*. "Though thou be ex-"alted as an eagle, and though thou set thy nest among "the stars; thence will I bring thee down, saith the "Lord." Abd. v. 4.

V. 9. *And the kings of the earth who have committed fornication, and lived in delicacies with her, shall weep, and bewail themselves over her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning.*

V. 10. *Standing afar off for fear of her torments, saying: Alas! alas! that great city Babylon, that mighty city: for in one hour is thy judgment come.*

Here the *kings* and princes of the earth, who had shared with her in her idolatry, cruelty, and luxury, are introduced as *standing afar off*, lamenting and *bewailing* the dreadful fate of that once great and powerful city, and which they now see in flames. St. Austin informs us that "the people of the eastern provinces and the remotest "cities, mourned in a public manner on this occasion." De civ. lib. 1. c. 33.

V. 11. *And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her: for no man shall buy their merchandise any more.*

V. 12. *Merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones; and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner of vessels of ivory, and all manner of vessels of precious stone, and of brass, and of iron, and of marble,*

V. 13. *And cinnamon, and odours, and ointment, and*

frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.

V. 14. *And the fruits of the desire of thy soul are departed from thee, and all fat and goodly things are perished from thee, and they shall find them no more at all.*

V. 15. *The merchants of these things, who were made rich, shall stand afar off from her, for fear of her torments, weeping and mourning.*

V. 16. *And saying: Alas! Alas! that great city, which was clothed with fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and was gilt with gold and precious stones, and pearls:*

V. 17. *For in one hour are so great riches come to nought.*

The *merchants* and tradesmen, who had *enriched* themselves by the luxury and extravagance of the Romans, are likewise here deploring the fate of the city, because there is now no more sale for their *merchandise*. We see here enumerated the articles of their luxury, in dress, in ornaments, in furniture, in equipage, in the sumptuousness of their tables, &c. The emperors embellished Rome with magnificent palaces, theatres, &c. which were enriched with the most costly furniture and ornaments. The whole earth was ransacked to supply the extravagance of that one city. Nero in particular built an immense palace, which occupied mount Palatine, part of mount Esquiline, and the large space between. This palace was so richly furnished and so splendidly decorated, that it was styled "the golden "palace of Nero." Excessively extravagant was also the luxury and profusion of some of the Roman emperors at their tables. Caius Caligula once spent, according to Seneca, for a supper, one hundred and fifty thousand crowns. Suetonius tells us, the emperor Vitelius would feast himself three, sometimes four times a day, spending ten thousand crowns at each meal. He had at his table dishes made up of the brains of pheasants and peacocks, others of the tongues and livers of rare birds, others of the milts of some particular fish. And so of other instances. But now, what an alteration in the scene! all these delicious and expensive dainties

: *perished*, and no more to be found. All the *fine* ien, *purple*, *silk*, *precious stones*, *pearls*, &c. the costly ess of the emperors, empresses, magistrates, and citiens, are vanished. All the pompous train of equipage f *horses*, *and chariots*, *and slaves*, *and souls of men*, or free nen, is plundered and carried away. All the stately palaces, and shining ornaments of *gold and silver*, *of marble and brass*, *and ivory*, &c. are now the fuel of fire. In fine, all the *riches* of this most opulent city of the world, *are in one hour come to nought.*

V. 17. *And every ship-master, and all that sail into the lake* *, *and mariners, and as many as work in the sea, stood afar off,*

V. 18. *And cried, seeing the place of her burning* †, *saying: what city is like to this great city?*

V. 19. *And they cast dust upon their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, saying: Alas! Alas! that great city, wherein all were made rich, that had ships at sea, by reason of her prices: for in one hour she is made desolate.*

The masters of ships, their crews, the seafaring men, all join their lamentations in seeing from afar off the conflagration of that *great city*, which never had an equal. They *mourn*, and deplore the loss of the great profits they gained by conveying to her all sorts of rich goods, which she bought in abundance and at high prices. All this lucrative traffick is now vanished; *for in one hour she is made desolate.*—In fine, the fall of this idolatrous, proud, and tyrannical city, is thus concluded.

V. 20. *Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy Apostles and Prophets: for God hath judged your judgment on her.*

Heaven, those *holy apostles*, and those *prophets* or ministers of the gospel and holy men, whom Rome had put to death, are here invited to *rejoice*; because the divine justice is accomplished in the ruin of that guilty city.——Upon which breaks out the following exultation:

* In the Greek, *and all the company upon the ships.*

† Gr. *the smoke of her burning.*

Apoc. Chap. xix. v. 1. *After these things I heard,* says St. John, *as it were the voice of much people* in heaven, saying: Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and power, is to our God:*

V. 2. *For true and just are his judgments, who hath judged the great harlot, which corrupted the earth with her fornication, and hath revenged the blood of his servants, at her hands.*

V. 3. *And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke ascendeth for ever and ever.*

V. 4. *And the four and twenty Ancients, and the four living Creatures, fell down and adored God that sitteth upon the throne, saying: Amen: Alleluia.*

V. 5. *And a voice came out from the throne, saying: Give praise to our God, all ye his servants: and you that fear him, little and great.*

From all that has been said, this text is sufficiently clear to need no further explanation.

May we not now reflect with astonishment on the dreadful fate of this city. Rome, the greatest of all cities, the most oppulent of all cities, the queen of the world, is struck down from the pinnacle of power, is laid in ruins, and left without an inhabitant. *How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people? How is the mistress of nations become as a widow?* Jer. Lamen. i. 1. That mighty city, which seemed to be invigorated with more than human strength, and had carried her conquests almost to the bounds of the known world, was laid in ashes by Alaric; and though somewhat afterwards allowed to recover, it was only to take breath, and then to be utterly laid waste, and her walls and fortresses to be thrown down. *The Lord has kindled in me, as it were, a flaming fire devouring round about.—The Lord is become as an enemy: he hath cast me down head-long, he hath overthrown all my walls, and hath destroyed my strong holds,* Lamen. ii. 35. Those northern nations, which she had before held in contempt, and not thought worth a conquest, now assault her like ravenous wolves, and raging with rancour and fury they strip her naked, and tear out

* In the Greek, *of a great multitude.*

her bowels without mercy; nor is she able to prevent her fate. *All thy enemies have opened their mouth against thee: they have hissed, and gnashed with the teeth, and have said: We will swallow her up: lo, this is the day which we looked for.* Ibid. ii. 16. *Her adversaries are become her lords, her enemies are enriched—My strength is weakened: The Lord hath delivered me into a hand, out of which I am not able to rise.* Ibid. i. 5. 14. Who could have imagined that that stately city, the metropolis of the world, which had long been the admiration of all nations, and to which they resorted to view her grandeur or to share in her pleasures, would one day be reduced into desolation and made a solitude? *Is this the city of perfect beauty, the joy of all the earth?* Ibid. ii. 15. But it was clear, she was the victim of God's anger, and her fate was just. For, *the Lord had spoken against her for the multitude of her iniquities.* Ibid. i. 5.

Thus, then, in fine fell ancient Rome like Babylon, but with this difference, that Babylon was never to rise again; whereas Rome, when the anger of God was satisfied, was designed to emerge from her ashes: and though not allowed to recover her former temporal dominion, splendour, and riches, nor to rise, in her outward appearance, scarce above the condition of a village, when compared to her former extent and multitude of people; yet in her depressed state she is privileged with a higher dignity of another kind, of being not only a Christian city, but appointed the head and centre of spiritual dominion.

We have now seen the full accomplishment of the predictions, contained in the Apocalypse, respecting the destruction of ancient Rome and its empire. But we must not leave the subject without observing, that the same had been before in a general manner foretold by the prophet Daniel, and by what hand it was to be done. Thus spoke that prophet to Nabuchodonosor: *Thus thou sawest, till a stone was cut out of a mountain without hands, and it struck the statue upon the feet that were of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces—And the stone that struck the statue, became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.* Dan. ii. 34, 35. Christ *is the stone*

cut out of the mountain without hands; and the Roman empire, the fourth and greatest of the empires represented by the four parts of the statue, is here figured by *the feet of that statue.* Hence, the circumstance of the statue's feet being broken to pieces by the stone, shows that Christ was the hero, who should one day overthrow the mighty empire of Rome. He, by his superior might, threw down that great Colossus, because it had arrogantly bent its power against him, and had endeavoured, by supporting idolatry, to obstruct that dominion which he himself claimed over the whole earth. Christ could suffer no competitor: *I beheld,* says Daniel, *in the vision of the night, and lo, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and he came even to the Ancient of days: and they presented him before him. And he gave him power, and glory, and a kingdom: and all people, tribes, and tongues, shall serve him.* Dan. vii. 13, 14. This son of man, therefore, in vindication of his right to universal monarchy, crushed his proud enemy, Rome, and with it the empire of idolatry. He threw down the Seat which satan had so long held there, and he fixed in its place his own throne, to which *all people, tribes, and tongues,* were to bend. To show his supreme power, this divine monarch chose to convert the centre of idolatry into the centre of divine worship and religion, and there he placed his viceroy to govern his holy kingdom, and to superintend his people to the end of the world. *The saints of the most high God,* continues Daniel, *shall take the kingdom: and they shall possess the kingdom for ever and ever.* Ibid. v. 18.

who will be one, the greatest, and the most cruel of Mahomet's successors. And hence appears the reason, why St. John is invited to the view of the present spectacle by the *fourth living creature*, which, as we have observed, represents the prophet Daniel: the reason is, because that prophet had foretold the coming of Antichrist, and his great power, as we shall see in the sequel.

Here then we discover the rise and progress of a power, which, in the course of time will become the mighty empire of Antichrist; the destruction of which is reserved to be the work of Christ himself, and thus the *lamb* will show that *strength*, which he was said to receive. Apoc. v. 12.—See p. 18.

Let us here further remark, that in each of the four preceding seals there appeared a *horse*, for his strength, the natural emblem of power or empire: that in the first seal the *horse* exhibited the empire of Christ; in the second, that of heresy; in the third, the empire of Rome falling away; and in this fourth, the rise of the Mahometan empire, which, as no *horse* appears in any of the subsequent seals, we may conclude to be the last great temporal power, that will exist upon earth, enemy to the Christian Church.

The preceding Explication illustrated by a brief account of Mahomet and the Mahometan Empire.

Mahomet was born at Mecca, in Arabia, in the year 571, of poor parents, who were of the race of Ismael. His father was a heathen, and his mother a Jew. Being very young when his parants died, he was educated by an uncle, who put him to trade. He afterwards married a rich widow, whose business he managed. Being arrived at about forty years of age, he commenced prophet, and set to compose a new religion. He said that the true religion had been corrupted by the Jews and the Christians, and that therefore God had sent him, as his prophet, to restore it to its purity.

He taught them that there was one only God, but no distinction of persons in the Deity. He exploded the Incarnation, and all the other mysteries of the Christian

religion. He adopted circumcision, and prescribed abstinence from wine, blood, and pork. On another hand, he allowed every man to have four wives, and concubines without restriction: but he reserved to himself the liberty of marrying as often as he pleased, and he is said to have had at least fifteen wives, and ten of them together. He exhorted people to take up arms for religion, promising a paradise of all the sensual pleasures to those who should die fighting in that cause. To make war against unbelievers he declared to be of high merit before God. He taught predestination, affirming that every man's fate was absolutely decreed; and that the term of every man's life was fixed by God, not to be shortened by any accidents, or prolonged by any means whatever.

These, and other impious tenets, which he pretended to have received from the angel Gabriel, he procured a person to pen down, as he could neither read, nor write; and the book he called "Alcoran." When seized with epileptic fits, to which he was subject, he was then visited, as he divulged, by the angel Gabriel; whose appearance being more than he could bear, occasioned him to fall into those trances and convulsions. Such was his imposture. His doctrine met with much opposition from some of his countrymen of Mecca. They called him a madman, an impostor, and said he was possessed by the devil. But his partisans increasing daily, the magistrates of the town began to be alarmed, and suspecting he had a design upon the government, they resolved to take away his life. Mahomet having intimation of their design, fled to Medina. This retreat, which happened in the year 622, gives date to the Mahometan Æra, called Hegira, or "the flight." At Medina he was joined by new proselytes, chiefly thieves and fugitive slaves, who the more freely flocked to him on account of the latitude he allowed them in indulging their sensual desires. Having formed a small body, he set himself at the head of them, as their chief and legislator. He told them, he was not sent to do miracles, but to propagate religion by the power of the *sword*. He first attacked the caravans, that travelled

through the country for trade; and meeting with success, he enriched his followers, and enlarged his projects. His little army being soon increased, he proceeded against the town of Mecca, took it, and put his principal opponents to death. He then subdued one tribe of people after another, carrying the sword of destruction through the country, and forcing the people to submit to him, and to receive his religion, or pay him an annual tribute. His progress was such, that he was master of almost all Arabia, when he died in 631. His followers were called "Saracens," or "Musulmans." From his actions, and his maxims, one may conclude, that ambition, lust, and cruelty, were the characteristics of this famous impostor.

Abubeker, one of Mahomet's first adherents, succeeded him in command, and taking the name of *Caliph*, or *Lieutenant*, carried on his late master's conquests over other Arabian nations. Amron, one of his generals, having advanced into the territory of Gaza, and laid siege to that town, the governor asked him the reason of such an act of hostility. Amron answered, "We "come by the order of our prince to propose to you the "acceptance of our religion. If you choose to embrace "it, we shall be brethren: if not, pay us tribute, and "you shall be our allies. But if you agree to neither, "the sword must decide, and we shall wage war against "you, to execute the order of God."

Abubeker dying in 634, was succeeded by Omar. This caliph completed the conquest of the rest of Arabia. Then he invaded Syria, where he defeated the imperial army commanded by Theodorus, brother to Heraclius, emperor of Constantinople. Heraclius, fearing the success of the Arabian's arms, quitted Syria, and went to Jerusalem, from whence he removed the Holy Cross, with other valuable things, to Constantinople. His brother hazarded a second battle, which he lost, and the Saracens became masters of Damascus, and afterwards of the country of Phœnicia. The caliph then divided his army; one part of which he sent against Egypt, which they subdued, and dismembered from the eastern Roman empire, of which it had been

a considerable province, ever since Augustus's days. In the mean time Omar himself took the route of Jerusalem, which he resolved to besiege; and, unfortunately, the emperor Heraclius had not in those parts sufficient forces to oppose him. About this time St. Sopronius, bishop and patriarch of Jerusalem, in a letter to Sergius, patriarch of Constantinople, wrote: "Pray "for the emperors," Heraclius and his son, "that God "may make them victorious over all the barbarians; "but especially, that he may be pleased to humble the "pride of the Saracens, who, on account of our sins, have "suddenly broke in upon us, and ravaged all the coun-"try with terrible cruelty and impious arrogance."

Jerusalem, after maintaining a siege of two years, surrendered to Omar in 336, upon condition, that the inhabitants should remain in the peaceable possession of their fortunes and liberty, and the free exercise of the Christian religion. However, some time after, this caliph ordered a Mosque to be built on the very spot where had stood the temple of Solomon. From Jerusalem Omar marched to Antioch, capital of Syria, which, for want of forces and provisions, was forced to surrender. This conquest made him soon master of all Syria. And thus the Roman empire was divested of another province, which it had been in possession of for 700 years. In 639 the Saracens crossed the Euphrates, and overran Mesopotamia. From thence they advanced into Persia, defeated Isdegerdes the king, drove him out of his dominions, and seized upon the Persian empire. This caliph's progress was such, that he also subdued the greatest part of Armenia, with some other neighbouring countries. But in the midst of all this success he was assassinated, in 643.

Othman, of the race of Mahomet, was chosen Omar's successor. He carried on the conquests; took Cyprus, Rhodes, and other islands in the Mediterranean sea. His generals in Africa defeated Gregory, the imperial commander in those parts, and extended their conquests all along the coast on the Mediterranean sea to the straits of Gibraltar. Othman was murdered by his own rebellious subjects after twelve years reign, in 655. At

this chief's death, the Saracen empire comprehended all Arabia, Persia, Corasan, Diarbeck, or Mesopotamia, Irac, or Chaldæa, Syria, Phœnicia, Palestine, Egypt, with extensive countries in Africa.

Such was the amazing growth of the Mahometan power within the space of 33 years. This rapid progress of a people sprung from so mean and obscure an origin, astonished mankind, as few examples of the like could be discovered in the annals of the world: nor even could be compared with it, the singular success of the first daring invincible Romans. In this manner was exerted the power of the *sword* in the destruction of mankind, and in propagating an impious doctrine, and rooting out Christianity.

After such a course of extraordinary success, the Arabs, or Saracens, instead of sitting down to enjoy their acquisitions, were animated to attempt new conquests. In 662 they invaded several other territories of the Constantinopolitan or eastern Roman empire, which, if they did not reduce under their power, they at least brought from them a great number of captives, and laid waste the country. In 712 and 713, they passed from Africa into Spain, of which they conquered a considerable part, giving a sad specimen of their cruelty, for they burned the young people and the children, and spread terror over all the country. Here they made settlements, and were called "Moors," because they came from Mauritania in Africa. We shall pass over their incursions into France and Italy, and the barbarities they there committed.

By so many conquests this new empire grew at last to such a bulk, that it became too unwieldy in the hands of one ruler. This did not escape the observation of the governors, who had been appointed by the caliph over the different provinces, with large corps of troops under their command. Sensible at the same time of their own strength, and ambitious to be themselves masters, they renounced their subjection to the Arabian caliph, and set up their own authority. These rebellions gave rise to civil wars, which divided the empire into a number of independent principalities. But notwithstanding the

Mahometan power was thus weakened, the several princes still retained the same ambition to enlarge their dominions. In that view, about the beginning of the eleventh century, some of them carried their arms into the vast country of Indostan, and reduced a great part of it.

Afterwards others of these princes, or *Sultans*, as they were then called, made further irruptions into the Asiatic provinces of the Greek or Constantinopolitan empire, where they obtained new acquisitions. They were aided in these conquests by different tribes of Tartars or Turks, that came to them from the northern countries above the Caspian sea, and quitting idolatry, embraced Mahometism. Aladin, sultan of Iconium, in lesser Asia, had in particular received such considerable services from a tribe of these Tartars, under the command of Othman, that he made this chief his lieutenant-general. Upon Aladin's death, Othman obtained the sovereignty of his country, and thus laid the foundation of the Turkish monarchy at Iconium, about the year 1300. From him is the imperial Turkish family called Othman, or Ottoman. He conquered a great part of Cappadocia and Bythinia, in which last province he fixed his residence at the town of Prusa, which remained the imperial seat, till the Turks transferred it to Adrianople in 1404, and afterwards to Constantinople in 1453. Othman died in 1326.

The succeeding Turkish sultans inherited the warlike spirit of Othman their founder, and quarelling with the Saracen princes, took from them in process of time many countries, which they hold at this day. They likewise continued their conquests upon the Greeks, that is, upon the eastern Roman empire, and attempted even Constantinople itself, the emperor's seat, several times; but were repulsed or bought off by concessions. At last Mahomet II. resolved to reduce that city, and laid siege to it in 1453, with a land army of 300,000 men, and above a hundred gallies, with one hundred and thirty other smaller vessels. The garrison consisted of no more than five thousand Greeks and two thousand strangers, the command of which Constan-

tine Palæologus, the emperor, gave to Justinian, an experienced Genoese officer. Nothing was omitted by the emperor, to put the place in a good posture of defence. The city wall being double, and very strong, Mahomet prepared an artillery of fourteen batteries, procured some pieces of cannon of a prodigious size, that shot stone bullets of two hundred pounds*. These pieces had been cast by an Hungarian founder, a Christian, who having offered his services to Constantine, and met with little encouragement, went over to the sultan. These horrible engines of destruction were fired night and day, and carried with them such force, that they soon made large breaches in the wall. Under such extraordinary difficulties, the besieged, however, made a vigorous defence, repaired as much as possible the breaches, and made successful sallies, in which they killed many Turks, and burned some of their works.

Mahomet finding that his fleet was hindered from approaching the town by a great chain that crossed the entrance of the port, and which was defended by ships posted there for the purpose, is said to have practised an incredible expedient suggested by a renegado Christian, of conveying seventy of his ships, by means of engines, over the land for the space of eight miles into the haven. On another hand, to encourage his men, he promised them they should share among themselves the whole plunder of Constantinople, and that he who first mounted the wall, should be entitled to the government of the town. He told them, there had appeared a stream of light over the city, three nights together, which was a certain presage, that God had now withdrawn his protection from it. These promises and speeches animated surprisingly his troops, and he resolved upon a general assault. The emperor, who had intimation of the sultan's design, resolved on his side to make the most vigorous opposition, and harangued so

* See the Greek historians Phranzes and Chalcondylas; of whom Phranzes was master of the wardrobe to the emperor, and in the town during the siege.

pathetically his officers and men, that they all seemed ready to second his intention.

The dispositions being made for the attack, on the 29th of May, early in the morning, the general assault began, both by sea and land. The Turkish land forces advanced, under the fire of their cannon with surprising resolution, and were received with equal resistance by the Greeks, who performed prodigies of valour. The ditches were soon filled with the dead bodies of the Turks that were slain; and the emperor and Justinian exhibited such skill and heroic bravery, that the assailants were obliged to retire back. But the Janizaries coming to their assistance, they rallied, renewed the charge, and through the most violent fire of the besieged, and a storm of darts and stones, they gained the top of the wall, where a Janizary immediately planted the Turkish standard. This unexpected success inspired the Turks with new vigour, and damped the spirit of the Greeks.

The Mahometans had likewise the advantage on the side of the sea. But what completed the ruin of the besieged, was their being abandoned by their general Justinian, who, finding himself wounded, retired without appointing any one to command in his room; nor could he be prevailed upon to return by the most pressing remonstrances of the emperor. This retreat of Justinian so discouraged the Greeks, that they began to give way, and presently fled in great disorder and precipitation. The Turks immediately pouring in, like a torrent, at the breach, pursued the fugitives, slaughtering them, and pressing them so closely, that eight hundred of them were trodden to death. Among these was the emperor, who having placed himself at the breach, and made prodigious efforts to stop the inundation of the barbarians, was carried away by the multitude, and perished with them. Thus ended the reign of Constantine Palæologus in 1453; and in him expired the empire of the Greeks, that is, the eastern Roman empire, which had lasted 1123 years from its first establishment by Constantine the Great, in the year 330.

After the death of the emperor, the Turks met with

no more resistance; and those who had attacked the town at the side of the port, having also made good their entrance, the Greeks had their enemies both before and behind, and were slaughtered without mercy. Then the ruffians transferred their fury against the inhabitants, of whom they butchered such a number, that it is reckoned there perished in this sack of Constantinople forty thousand Greeks, and sixty thousand were afterwards sold for slaves. On this unhappy occasion, the Churches were prophaned; bishops were seen prisoners in their pontifical habits; and Nuns, in their religious dress, tied as slaves. The holy vestments were used as trappings for the horses. Meat was served up to the table in the sacred vessels, and chalices were used to drink out of. In fine, the barbarians gave a loose to all the human passions, and rioted with such licentiousness for three days, that they committed all kinds of excesses, and the most enormous and execrable crimes, that history has ever informed us to have been perpetrated on such occasions.

This Mahomet and his successors added to their conquests many other countries, both in Asia and Europe, which the Turks are still in possession of. To pursue this history any further, seems therefore unnecessary, and we may conclude with observing in general, that the Mahometan power and religion have prevailed to a prodigious extent, taking in the greatest part of Asia, many spacious countries in Africa, and not a small share of Europe: so that the event demonstrates that *power was given to him*, to Mahomet and his successors, *over the fourth part of the earth*, that is, already over the fourth part of the old world.

The sounding of the fourth trumpet.

Apoc. Chap. VIII. v. 12. *And the fourth Angel sounded the trumpet, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and third part of the stars, so that the third part of them was darkened, and the day did not shine for a third part of it, and the night in like manner.*

At the sounding of the fourth trumpet, behold! *the*

third part of the sun, and of the moon, and of the stars, is eclipsed, or struck with *darkness:* a noble figure indicating, that, while the Church of Christ is in the most flourishing state, and shining like those glorious luminaries, a *third part* of it becomes unfortunately obscured by the fatal heresy and schism of the Greeks. This schism was first broached by Photius, at Constantinople, in the year 866. It infected all orders of Christians, the clergy, the princes, and the body of the faithful, signified respectively by the *sun*, *moon*, and *stars;* and it *lopt* off nearly one third part of the church, spreading itself from Constantinople over a great number of the eastern Christian countries. Hence it happened, that the Catholic Church was robbed of a *third part* nearly of her members of all ranks and degrees, and was consequently despoiled of a *third part* of her lustre, which the prophet expresses by saying, that *the day did not shine for a third part of it, and the night in like manner.*

It is plain the defection of the Greeks gave such a shock to the Catholic Church, and tore away such a large portion of her, that it may by a just metaphor be called a *great earthquake*, Apoc. viii. 5. See p. 25.

At the opening of the fourth Seal, we saw the rise of Mahometism, which ushered in the fourth age: here we see the birth of the Greek schism, a second remarkable event, which distinguishes what may be deemed another period of the same age, commencing about the year 866.

The preceding Explication elucidated by a succinct History of the Greek Schism.

Photius, an eunuch, a man equally remarkable for his high birth, his abilities, and learning, was honoured with considerable employments at the imperial court of Constantinople: but he disgraced his talents and dignities by his base fraudulent practices and ambition.

He was a favourite of Bardas Cæsar, who was uncle to the young emperor Michael, and governed the state for him. This Bardas having been reprimanded and even excommunicated by St. Ignatius, patriarch of Constantinople, for his scandalous debauched life, re-

solved upon this prelate's ruin. Having much influence with his nephew, the emperor, he prevailed upon him to banish the patriarch from Constantinople. All means were then used to extort from Ignatius the resignation of his see, but he constantly refusing, Bardas had the presumption to nominate Photius, then a layman, to the patriarchate, in the year 858. But this nomination not being warranted by a previous election, and consequently contrary to the canons of the Church, no bishop would ordain Photius, till he had promised upon oath to acknowledge Ignatius as lawful patriarch, and not to act without his concurrence and direction. Nevertheless, in less than two months after his ordination, he persecuted violently all those of the clergy that adhered to Ignatius, and some he caused to be scourged, and others otherwise tormented. And in order to destroy Ignatius, he persuaded Bardas to commence an information against him, as having secretly conspired against the state. But nothing could be proved against the holy patriarch; who, nevertheless, was removed to a prison in the suburbs of Constantinople, and there cruelly tortured.

In consequence of such unchristian proceedings, several bishops of the province of Constantinople assembled, and excommunicated Photius. On the other side, Photius, supported by Bardas, in a synod of some of his adherents, pronounced sentence of deposition and excommunication against Ignatius, who thereupon was loaded with chains, and banished to Mitylene, in the isle of Lesbos. To colour so unjustifiable a step, Photius sent messengers with a letter to Pope Nicholas, in which he signified, that Ignatius had resigned his see on account of his age and infirmities, and that himself had been chosen for it by the Metropolitan bishops, and had been compelled by the emperor to undertake that heavy burthen: then he desired the Pope would ratify both the resignation and election. As the Pope received no account from Ignatius, who was not suffered by his enemies to send any, his Holiness dispatched two Legates with orders only to take informations, and transmit them to him. The legates being arrived at

Constantinople, Photius and the emperor found means to gain them over after a long resistance. Upon this a synod was held at Constantinople in 861, in which, by the prevarication of the legates, St. Ignatius, who had been sent for, was unjustly deposed, and afterwards imprisoned and most barbarously treated. Photius even advised the emperor to compel Ignatius to read his own condemnation in the Church, and then to have his eyes pulled out, and his hand cut off. But Ignatius suspecting some sinister design was hatched against him, disguised himself, made his escape out of prison, and fled.

Ignatius had by this time found means to inform the Pope of what had passed at Constantinople. His Holiness complained of the prevarication of his legates, condemned what had been done, and in his letters to the emperor and Photius insisted that Ignatius was the lawful patriarch, and Photius's nomination every way irregular and void. Then in a letter addressed to all the faithful in the East, the Pope orders the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, and the Metropolitans and other bishops, to hold the same sentiments with himself in regard to Ignatius and the intruder. Photius, like a daring impostor, suppressed the letter he had received from the Pope, and forged another, couched in terms favourable to himself; but the cheat was discovered. In fine, finding it impossible to make the Pope propitious to his cause, he resolved to wreak his revenge upon him: for which purpose, having secured the emperor in his interest, he held a council of his adherents at Constantinople, in 866, in which he presumed to pronounce sentence of deposition and excommunication against Pope Nicholas: and this was the origin of the Greek schism *. He got the acts of this pretended synod signed by twenty-one bishops;

* As the body of the Roman dominions had been divided into two empires; the Western, having Rome for its metropolis; and the Eastern, which had Constantinople for its capital: so the same division was usually admitted in the Church; the westesn part being often called the Latin Church, from the language used there; and the eastern was styled the Greek Church, likewise from its language.

but he added false subscriptions of others to the number of about a thousand. Then he wrote a circular letter to the eastern patriarchs and bishops, containing a charge against the Latin Church. First, he found fault with some points of discipline, which, before his rupture with the Church, he had approved in his confession of faith, which he sent to the Pope seven years before this period Then he proceeded to accuse the Latins of an error in faith, for teaching that the Holy Ghost proceeds, not from the Father only, but from the Father and the Son: which tenet had been taught by the Greek fathers, as well as the Latin. It had been approved in the third general council held at Ephesus, and in several subsequent general councils, and was expressly defined in the œcumenical council of Florence, in 1439. By rejecting this article, Photius, and those Greeks who adhered to him, added heresy to schism. But as their separation from the unity of the Catholic Church began by schism, it has retained that name.

Basil becoming emperor in 867, banished Photius to the isle of Scepe, and restored St. Ignatius to his see of Constantinople, after an exile of nine years. At this prelate's solicitations with the Pope and emperor, a general council of the Church was held at Constantinople, in 869, at which presided the legates of Pope Adrian II. who had succeeded Nicholas. The schismatical synod which had been held by Photius, as mentioned before, was here condemned; and he himself having been sent for, to appear before the council, after a long hearing, was excommunicated. Then Photius, by the emperor's orders, was sent back into banishment; but eight years after he prevailed upon the emperor to permit him to return to Constantinople.

Upon the death of St. Ignatius, in 878, Photius with armed men took possession of the Church of St. Sophia, and kept possession of the see of Constantinople, though repeatedly condemned by different Popes, till Leo the Wise succeeding Basil in the empire, in 886, banished Photius into a monastery in Armenia, where he died, after having lived full twenty years in open schism.

After the expulsion of Photius, the breach between the Latin and Greek Churches was made up, and harmony tolerably well restored; though in several instances the Greeks betrayed a spirit of animosity against the Latins. The wound had not received a perfect cure, and in 1053 it was opened afresh by Michael Cerularius, patriarch of Constantinople, who, upon frivolous pretences, and groundless accusations against the Latins, revived the schism, and drew into his party, among others, the patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem. The emperors themselves then joining in the cause, contributed much in the sequel to spread the infection through the eastern empire. And thus the Greeks were separated a second time from the unity of faith, and from the centre and prop of that unity, the Church of Rome. In 1269 Michael Palæologus, emperor of the Greeks, alarmed by the victorious arms of Charles of Anjou, king of Sicily, and fearing being attacked by him, applied to the Pope, desiring his Holiness would prevail with Charles not to direct his arms against the Greeks. The better to gain his end, Michael promised the Pope to come into measures for putting an end to the schism, and re-uniting the Greek to the Latin Church. This proposal was agreeable to his Holiness, as it offered what had been several times attempted, but in vain, by the preceding Popes. They had repeatedly exhorted the emperors and patriarchs of Constantinople to recognize their ancient mother, and unite in faith. This salutary advice had been rejected, but now circumstances appeared more favourable than ever for an union. In hopes therefore of success, a council was held in 1274 at Lyons, consisting of five hundred bishops, Pope Gregory X. presiding at it in person. Michael Palæologus, emperor of Constantinople, sent ambassadors to the council, to press the union of the two Churches. They being arrived, and the council assembled, the emperor's letter was read, containing his profession of the true orthodox faith; after which he added: "We acknowledge this to be the "true, holy, Catholic, and orthodox faith, and we re- "ceive and confess it with heart and mouth, the same

" as the Church of Rome teaches; and we promise to " keep it inviolably. We acknowledge the supremacy " of the Roman Church, &c." Then was read the letter of the Greek prelates, written in the names of thirty-five archbishops, with their suffragans, who nearly made up the whole number of the schismatic bishops. In this letter they expressed their concurrence to the re-union of the two Churches. In consequence therefore of these professions and declarations, the union was concluded and ratified.

This was a fair prospect, but soon vanished. The Greek emperor had used violent methods to extort the consent of the Orientals, for the union; and therefore for want of sincerity it could not be expected to hold. In effect, as soon as the Greeks saw they might have a protector in the person of the Duke of Patras, who was an enemy to the Union, they openly declared against it, and joining the duke, rebelled against their sovereign. Their party was strengthened by many of the emperor's own family; and his nearest relations, whom he sent at the head of his troops against the malcontents, some would not act, and others revolted from him. Such was the animosity and insolence of the schismatics, that having assembled a synod, they presumed to anathematise the pope and the emperor, and their adherents. This violent renunciation of the union was afterwards further confirmed by Andronicus, who succeeded his father Michael in the empire, retracted what he had formerly done in favour of that transaction, saying, he had been compelled to it, by the authority of his father.

Many attempts were made, in the sequel, by the popes, to renew the union, but they proved unsuccessful; till at last in 1437 a fresh negociation being set on foot between the Greek emperor John Palæologus and pope Eugenius IV. it was agreed that a general council should be held, of both the Greeks and Latins, in the west, for that important object. In pursuance of this determination, a council being appointed and opened at Ferrara by the pope himself, in 1438, the emperor and the patriarch of Constantinople, with twenty oriental

archbishops and bishops, and a great number of other Greek clergy, of distinguished abilities and merit, repaired thither. The patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, sent also their deputies. Some inconveniences happening at Ferrara, the council was transferred, with the consent of the Greeks, to Florence. There all difficulties being discussed, the emperor, the patriarch of Constantinople, and the Greek bishops, professed, according to the faith of the Roman Catholic Church, that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father and the Son, and that the Pope was the head of the Universal Church, &c. Then the reunion of the two Churches was agreed to, and a decree drawn up for that purpose. In this decree were contained the articles of faith above-mentioned, and other points which the Greeks had contested, and which were now defined conformable to the Catholic doctrine. The pope, the emperor, and all the Greeks, as well as Latins, subscribed the decree, except Mark, archbishop of Ephesus, who alone among the Greeks, refused to sign it. Then they all kissed the pope's hand, and embraced one another in token of union and mutual charity. Thus was this momentous affair concluded in 1439.

The eyes of all Christendom had been attentively fixed on this council, and the happy issue of it diffused universal joy through the Catholic Church. What event, indeed, could possibly be more desirable, than that so large a body of Christians, separated for so many ages from the unity of faith, should at length be brought back, and re-enter into the bosom of their mother-church? But this bright sunshine of concord and joy had only emerged from one cloud, presently to be intercepted by another. When the emperor and the Greeks arrived at Constantinople, they found the clergy of that city violently prepossessed against the union, and had inspired the people with the same disposition. They reviled bitterly all those who had signed it, calling them traitors and apostates, and they extolled with the highest encomiums Mark of Ephesus, for his courage in refusing alone his consent. This obstinate prelate seeing the tide run thus in his favour, availed himself of it, to de-

claim and write against the union. In fine, the schismatics worked themselves up to such a degree of rage, that an inundation of libels soon appeared, fraught with virulence, calumnies, and falsehoods. So much opposition and ill treatment those met with who had been at the council of Florence, and assented to the union, made such impression upon them, that many lost courage, yielded to the stream, and gave up the cause. They even renounced what they had done, and setting up to oppugn the faith they had embraced, they greatly contributed to increase the party. To complete the misfortune, the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, stirred up by the schismatic bishop of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, assembled a synod, in 1443, in which they condemned what had been done at Florence, and threatened to excommunicate the emperor if he continued to adhere to the Latins. The deference which the orientals paid to these patriarchs, influenced them to receive their determination, and to remain in schism. Russia likewise, and Moscovy, which had adopted some centuries before the schism of the Greeks, followed now their example, rejected the union, and imprisoned the pope's legate, who came to propose it to them. Thus *was a third part of the sun, moon, and stars, smitten and darkened* a second time, or at least remained eclipsed. And thus vanished the fair prospect of a noble triumph for the Catholic faith.

A few years after this period, that is, in the beginning of the year 1451, pope Nicholas V. a pontiff of remarkable piety and learning, grieving at the invincible obstinacy of the Greeks, and reflecting on the repeated labours taken for their conversion, wrote to them a letter, in which, after mentioning the preparation the Turks were making against them, and the succours they might hope for from the Catholic princes, he then exhorted them, in a pathetic manner, not to render useless, by their ingratitude to God, these succours, but to open their eyes upon their past stubbornness, and to unite themselves to the Catholic Church, according to the agreement made at Florence. He addressed himself in particular to Constantine Palæologus, then

emperor of Constantinople, to the following tenour: "That the Greeks had abused too long the patience of "both God and men, in persisting still in heresy and "schism; that, conformable to the parable in the Gos- "pel, God would further wait, to see if the fig-tree, af- "ter so much care and attendance in vain, would at last "yield fruit: that if it did not within the space of three "years, which God still allowed them, the tree would "be cut down by the root, and the Greek nation entire- "ly ruined by the ministers of divine justice, who "would be sent to execute the sentence already pro- "nounced in heaven against them." We shall presently see the literal accomplishment of this prediction.

The pouring out of the Fourth Vial.

APOC. Chap. XVI. v. 8. *And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the Sun, and it was given unto him to afflict men with heat and fire:*

V. 9. *And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who hath power over these plagues, neither did they penance to give him glory.*

Here is the punishment of the Greek schismatics for their long and obstinate rebellion against the Catholic Church.

In the prophecy of the fourth trumpet, the *Sun* was introduced to represent the principle of light, here it is employed as the principle of *heat;* which are known to be the two chief qualities of the sun. The vial is therefore poured out on the *sun*, to convert its quality of *heat* or *fire*, into an instrument of divine vengeance against the Greeks. And in consequence, *it is given unto him*, the sun, *to afflict men with heat and fire*. In effect, this people suffered extremely by the destructive *fire* of terrible engines of war, that were worked by gunpowder. We have seen, page 132, that no less than fourteen batteries of cannon were employed to fire against the town of Constantinople, besides the ships of war; and that in this dreadful artillery were some such huge pieces of cannon, as had never been seen or heard of before. With these were the walls of the city shatter-

which Rome was reduced to ashes, but which Mahomet prohibited, perhaps by superior direction, from Constantinople. But on another hand, if pagan Rome was burned, from its ashes arose up a Christian Rome, with a new kind of power and dignity peculiar to itself, which was to last to the end of the world: whereas, though Constantinople was spared from destruction, it was enslaved by a barbarous people, the greatest enemies to Christianity. The Jews had formerly rejected the preaching and miracles of the Son of God, for which reason they were delivered over to the sword of the pagans, their inveterate enemies. In like manner, all the entreaties, exhortations, and labours of the Catholic Church, to reclaim the Greeks from their errors, they rejected with disdain; and on that account they fell a just sacrifice to the anger of God. He had waited many years, to give them time to resume a spirit of obedience and produce good fruit, but finding their obstinacy invincible, he cut them down like the barren fig-tree, as pope Nicholas had foretold them. They refused the jurisdiction of a spiritual superior, whom Christ has appointed over his whole flock; and they fell into the hands of tyrannical masters, from whom they have nothing to expect, but oppression, slavery, and despair. No kingdom can stand that opposes the kingdom of Christ; for *he is Lord of lords, and King of kings*, Apoc. xvii. 14, and *a two-edged sword proceeds from his mouth*, Apoc. i. 16, see p. 8, for the destruction of his enemies.

CHAPTER VIII.

The History of the Fifth Age of the Christian Church.

The Opening of the Fifth Seal.

APOC. Chap. VI. v. 9. *And when he*, the Lamb, *had opened the fifth seal, I saw*, says St. John, *under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.*

V. 10. *And they cried with a loud voice, saying: How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and revenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*

V. 11. *And white robes were given to every one of them one: and it was said to them; that they should rest yet for a little time, till their fellow servants and their brethren, who are to be slain, even as they, should be filled up.*

The Lamb having opened the fifth seal, St. John hears the complaints of those who had been *slain for the word of God*, that is, for the observance of the law of God, and *for the testimony which they held*, or for the testimony which they had rendered to Christ in preaching and defending his doctrine. These martyrs are seen *under the altar* in heaven, similar to the altar of Holocausts, which stood in the Jewish tabernacle. On that altar the victims, called Holocausts, were burnt, and their remains, the ashes, fell under the altar. In allusion to this, the *souls*, or precious spiritual remains of those whose bodies had been slain, and sacrificed in the fire of persecution, are here seen under the altar. Who are the martyrs, spoken of in this seal, we are now to examine: and it must be observed, that under the name of martyrs, we comprehend all those who have suffered death for religion, whether they have been declared

martyrs of the Church or not. In the first place; it is well known that the Reformation, introduced by Luther, and other new teachers, has had too much share in the spilling of blood for the cause of religion. We do not pretend to produce an account of all the individuals that have suffered by their hands. The history of the reformation, in many cases, relates only in general the massacres committed on the Catholics. The anabaptists in Germany opened the cruel scene, very soon after the birth of the Protestant religion. They were actuated with such rancour against those whose communion they had left, that in 1525 they plundered the country, set fire to the churches and monasteries, and murdered the priests, monks, and noblemen. Arnoldus Mesov. hist. des. Anabap. Dupin. The Calvanists on another hand, wherever they came, committed unheard of violences and barbarities. Dreadful was the tragedy in France, Holland, in some parts of Germany, &c. Nicholas Froumenteau, a reformed minister, confesses that the Calvanists massacred, in the province of Dauphine only, 256 priests, and 112 monks and friars. Des financ de Franc. In Holland we find that nineteen priests and religious men were taken by the Calvanists in Gorcum, and after being made to suffer many insults, were hanged for their religion at the town of Bril, on the same day, 1572. See their history in W. Estius, Batavia sacra.

England also showed itself very forward in persecuting those who were attached to the ancient faith. Sir Thomas More, lord high chancellor, and Fisher, bishop of Rochester, two illustrious ornaments of the nation, and distinguished asserters of the Catholic religion, were beheaded in 1535, for refusing to subscribe to the spiritual supremacy which Henry VIII. usurped over the Church in England. Besides, that despotic and cruel monarch put to death thirteen abbots and priors, about seventy-seven monks and religious persons, and many of the laity. Heylen's Hist. of the Reformation.

Violent was the persecution in Queen Elizabeth's reign; it was even aggravated with severities used in

the heathenish times, as tortures were sometimes applied to the generous victims before they were allowed to receive the stroke of death. There have been found to have suffered death, *for the testimony they held*, in this reign, at least 124 priests, and 57 lay-persons; besides others, who perished in prison. Under king James I. though the persecution somewhat abated, it did not cease. No less than twenty-seven persons of different denominations were put to death for the Catholic faith in this reign. Charles I. was naturally of too humane a disposition to incline to persecution; but such was the iniquity of the times, and the importunity of malevolent persons, that he was forced away with the tide, and ordered the execution of the penal laws against his Catholic subjects. Twenty-two were sacrificed in this period. The temper of the times was nearly the same during a part of Charles II.'s reign, and such unhappily was his compliant disposition, that twenty-four persons were put to death for the Catholic faith, and many died in prison. Thus the annals of England are stained with the blood of many of its own subjects, immolated to the cause of religion. See a particular account of these persecutions in the "Memoirs of Missionary Priests," &c.

We shall now remove the scene to a distant part of the world. St. Francis Xavier planted the Catholic faith in the idolatrous kingdom of Japan in 1549, baptized great numbers, and whole provinces received the gospel. In 1592 a persecution was raised against the Christians by the emperor Cambacundono, who usurped the honours of a deity; and several Japonese converts received the crown of martyrdom. The emperor Tagcosama, one of the proudest and most vicious of men, revived the persecution in 1597, and three Jesuits, six Franciscans, and seventeen converts, were condemned to be crucified. As they hung upon the crosses, the executioners, at a signal given, pierced their bodies with lances; upon which they expired, and went to receive the reward *for being slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.* Their blood and garments were procured by Chris-

tians, and miracles were wrought by them. In 1602, the pagan emperor Cumbosama renewed again the bloody tragedy, and many Christians were beheaded, crucified, or burned. In 1614, new cruelties were employed to overcome the fortitude of the Christian heroes, as bruising their feet between pieces of wood, cutting off or squeezing their limbs one after another, applying red-hot irons or slow fires, flaying off the skin of the fingers, putting burning coals to their hands, tearing off the flesh with pincers, or thrusting reeds into different parts of their bodies: all which innumerable persons, even children, bore with invincible constancy till death. In 1616, Xogun succeeding his father Cubosama in the empire, surpassed him in cruelty. By his orders fifty martyrs suffered together, of whom nine were Jesuits, four Franciscans, and six Dominicans; the others laymen. Twenty-five were burned, the rest beheaded. Many others suffered variously, being either burnt at slow fires, crucified, beheaded, or thrown into a burning mountain, or hung with their heads downwards in pits. In 1639, all Europeans, except the Dutch, were forbid entrance into Japan. Five Jesuits landed there secretly in 1642, but being discovered, after cruel tortures, they were hung down in pits till they expired.

St. Francis Xavier, after having established Christianity in Japan, was desirous also of carrying the standard of the cross into the great pagan empire of China, but died before he reached it. His religious brethren, the Jesuits, inspired with a truly apostolic spirit, pursued the design, and after many fruitless attempts, at last got admittance into the country in 1583. They soon converted many, and numerous Churches of Christians began to flourish in several provinces of China. But the inveterate enemy of Christianity, the devil, irritated at seeing his own power decline in a kingdom he had so long kept in captivity, set himself to work, in order to extirpate the Christian religion, or at least to stop its growth. He wreaked his first fury on father Francis Martinez, a Chinese Jesuit, who having converted a famous doctor, was beaten several times,

and at length expired under the torment. Then he proceeded against the Dominican friars, who had likewise entered China, and converted great numbers to the faith. Four of them received the crown of martyrdom in the year 1647, and a fifth in 1648. Chunchi, who ascended the imperial throne of China in 1650, was favourable to the Christians; but after his demise, the four regents of the empire put to death five Christian manderins for their faith: but the young emperor Camhi, coming of age, put a stop to the persecution, and gave liberty to the Christians in 1671. The emperor Kein-long renewed the persecution in a most cruel manner. A great number of Christians of all ages and sexes were banished, beaten, and tortured divers ways. Many priests and others died of their torments, or of the hardships of their imprisonment. Peter Sanz, a Dominican friar and bishop, was beheaded in 1747. Four Dominicans were seized, beaten with clubs, buffeted on the face with leather gauntlets, and after twenty-eight months imprisonment, were strangled privately in their dungeons, in 1748. In the same persecution two Jesuits, after repeated tortures, were also strangled in prison.

In Tonquin, a kingdom south-west of China, also enslaved to idolatry, the Christian religion had taken deep root by the zealous labours of religious missionaries. But in the year 1743 a persecution was set on foot, in which 150 Churches were demolished, many converts were beaten on their knees with a hammer, and tortured various other ways, and two priests of the order of St. Dominick suffered martyrdom for the faith. See the histories of Trigault, Charlevoix, &c.

There have likewise been martyrs within the two last centuries in other kingdoms of the East-Indies, as in Carnate, Tanjour, Madura, &c. And the new discovered continent of America has also been sprinkled with Christian blood. See Lettres curieuses et edifiantes.

We have now seen who they are *that have been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.* These martyrs are the objects represented under

the fifth Seal. As those who suffered by the hands of the Protestants, appear to be the first in time, we may fix the fifth epocha, or commencement of the fifth age of the Church, at the year 1525, or at the rise of Luther's reformation, about the year 1520.

We must further observe, that the blood here *spilt* in the cause of religion, is a remarkable characteristic of this fifth age; as before that period, for eight or nine hundred years, few are to be found who suffered for the faith.

We now proceed with the text. *And they*, the above-mentioned martyrs, *cried with a loud voice, saying: how long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and revenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* How long, O Lord, do you defer judging our cause, you, who are *holy*, and must detest the cruelties exercised upon us; you, who are *true*, and have told us you will revenge the injuries done to your servants? *Will not God revenge*, says Christ, *his elect who cry to him day and night, and will he have patience in their regard? I say to you, that he will quickly revenge them.* Luke xviii. 7, 8. The martyrs therefore prefer their complaint to the throne of God, requesting the judgment of their cause, not in a spirit of revenge, but that the justice and sanctity of God, who is *holy and true*, may be vindicated.

And white robes were given to every one of them one; a symbol of the heavenly beatitude, into which they are received in coming from their conflicts. *And it was said to them, that they should rest yet for a little time, till their fellow-servants and their brethren, who are to be slain, even as they, should be filled up.* They are told here to wait *a little while*, till the number be completed of *their fellow-servants*, that is, of the bishops, priests, and other clergy, and of *their brethren*, that is, of the laity; who are to suffer martyrdom, as they have done. Thus they are told to wait *a little while*, that is, to the time of the persecution raised in France, in 1791, &c. and the horrible massacres then committed of the clergy and others in hatred to religion: to which may perhaps be added other persecutions that may happen in that or

other countries during this fifth period of the Church. When thus the number of these victims immolated to religion *shall be filled up*, then the Almighty *will revenge the blood* of them all.

What human oblation can be more grateful and glorious to the Divine author of the Christian religion, than the sacrifice of holy victims slain for his sake? And this is the *honour* which the *Lamb* was entitled to receive, and here actually receives. Apoc. v. 12. See p. 18.

Before we proceed to the prophecy of the fifth Trumpet, it is proper to take notice of what St. John prefixes to it.

Apoc. Chap. viii. v. 13. *And I beheld*, says he, *and heard the voice of one eagle* * *flying through the midst of Heaven, saying with a loud voice: Wo, Wo, Wo, to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the rest of the voices of the three Angels, who are yet to sound the trumpet.*

Behold an *eagle*, a suitable bird on this occasion, on account of its swiftness, *flies* through the midst of the sky, announcing with a loud voice a *Wo* on each of the three succeeding ages, namely, the fifth, sixth, and seventh: by which we may understand, that greater disasters remain to be sustained by the Church of Christ in these three last than in the preceding ages.

The Sounding of the fifth Trumpet.

Apoc. Chap. IX. v. 1. *And the fifth Angel sounded the trumpet, and I saw*, says St. John, *a star fall from Heaven unto the earth, and there was given to him the key of the bottomless pit.*

V. 2. *And he opened the bottomless pit: and the smoke of the pit arose, as the smoke of a great furnace: and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke of the pit.*

V. 3. *And from the smoke of the pit there came out locusts upon the earth: and power was given to them, as the scorpions of the earth have power:*

* In the Greek text, *an Angel.*

V. 4. *And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree; but only the men who have not the sign of God on their foreheads.*

V. 5. *And it was given unto them that they should not kill them; but that they should torment them five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man.*

V. 6. *And in those days men shall seek death, and shall not find it: and they shall desire to die, and death shall fly from them.*

V. 7. *And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold: and their faces were as the faces of men.*

V. 8. *And they had hair as the hair of women; and their teeth were as of lions.*

V. 9. *And they had breast-plates as breast-plates of iron; and the noise of their wings was as the noise of chariots, of many horses running to battle.*

V. 10. *And they had tails like to scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had over them,*

V. 11. *A king, the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek Apollyon: in Latin Exterminans*, that is, Destroyer.

Here is a description of the rise and progress of the Reformation. This Trumpet begins with announcing to us the *fall* of a *star* from Heaven; a very just emblem of the apostacy of Luther, who, in quality of a priest and religious man, is styled *a star*, but renouncing his faith and vows, in which he had hitherto virtuously lived, may truly be said *to have fallen from Heaven.* This star fell upon *the earth*, that is, upon the Church, compared to the fixed solid *earth*, because she was then in a state of peace.

Martin Luther, an Augustinian Friar, a bold man, and vehement declaimer, having imbibed erroneous sentiments from the heretical writings of John Huss of Bohemia, took occasion, from the publication of indulgences promulgated by pope Leo X. to break with the

Catholic Church, and to propagate his new errors, in 1517, at Wittemberg, in Saxony. He first inveighed against the abuse of indulgences; then he called in question their efficacy: and at last totally rejected them. He proceeded to broach new opinions, contrary to the Catholic doctrine; as, that remission of sins was not founded on contrition, but on faith alone; that good works were not necessary for salvation; and other tenets which will occur in the sequel. He threw off his religious habit, renounced the solemn vows he had made to God, abandoned his cloister, and returned to the world. He declaimed against the supremacy of the See of Rome, and condemned the whole Church, pretending that Christ had abandoned it, and that it wanted reforming, as well in faith as discipline. Thus this new Evangelist commenced that fatal defection from the ancient faith, which was styled "Reformation," and which afterwards overspread so large a part of western Christendom. Such was the dismal alarm sounded to the Church by the fifth trumpet.

The fifth seal exhibited to us only a particular interesting circumstance of the Reformation, but now we shall see that the trumpet unfolds its whole history.

There was given to him the key of the bottomless pit, ver. 1. To St. Peter were given the keys of heaven, but to Luther is given the key of the *bottomless pit*, or hell. Alas! what a woful difference, and what disparity is here indicated in the characters and functions of the apostle, and the reformer! Christ assured St. Peter, that he and the other apostles, who had quitted all to follow him, should, at the last day, *sit on twelve seats judging the twelve tribes of Israel*, Matt. xix. 28. But Luther, instead of meriting such a happy pre-eminence in heaven, by having renounced all temporal enjoyments for Christ, unfortunately retracts the renunciation he had made, returns to the world, and therefore is cast down like *a fallen star*, from heaven to earth, forfeiting the glorious crown he had seemed before to grasp in his hands. To St. Peter Christ gave a supereminent power, and heavenly function; *To thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever*

thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven, Matt. xvi. 19. But how opposite is the power and function of Luther! namely, *to open the bottomless pit*, or infernal abyss, from whence flowed a stream of calamities that fell upon the kingdom of Christ on earth. Our Saviour said to St. Peter, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it*, Matt. xvi. 18. But Luther boldly *opened the bottomless pit*, or the gates of hell, to endeavour to prevail against that Church. St. Peter was constituted by Christ the chief pastor of his whole flock; *feed my lambs, feed my sheep*, Joan. xxi. 16, 17, said Christ to him. But our reformer, by his own authority, declared himself head and ringleader of a multitude of sectaries, who, like devouring wolves, have laid waste the fold of Christ.

And he opened the bottomless pit: and the smoke of the pit arose, as the smoke of a great furnace, v. 2. Luther therefore opened the door of hell, and there issued out a thick *smoke, as from a great furnace*. What can this thick smoke be, but a strong spirit of seduction, which had been hatched in hell, or had the devil for its parent, and which, at Luther's opening Hell's door, immediately burst out? Impregnated with this *steam*, or spirit of seduction, he brought forth a doctrine, big with delusion and error. And as the steam he imbibed was hot, as coming from *a great furnace*, he propagated his doctrine with heat, violence, and insolence. "I now "declare, says he, speaking to the bishops, that for "the future I will not vouchsafe you so much honour, "as to submit myself or doctrine to your judgment, or "that of an angel from heaven." (Preface to his book, Adversus falso nominatum ordinem Episcoporum.) He wrote a book which he entitled, "Against the exe-"crable Bull of Antichrist," meaning the Bull of his condemnation by pope Leo X. This book he concluded in these words: "In the same manner that they ex-"communicate me, I excommunicate them again." In another book, which he published in defence of the articles condemned by the above-mentioned Bull, "For-

" bear ye," says he, " to make war against the Turk, " until the name of the Pope be taken from beneath the " heavens: I have said it." Numberless other instances of his violence and fury might be alleged. Such was his spirit of pride, that he made open profession of contempt for the authority of the Church, councils, and fathers; whilst he arrogated an infallibility to himself, and anathematized all, whether catholics or protestants, that dissented from him. The other reformers imbibed the same hot *steam*, that issued out of the infernal abyss. They in consequence broached new doctrines, which they propagated and defended with such heat and vehemence, as to occasion every where seditions and insurrections, which they seemed to glory in. Their patriarch Luther openly boasted of it. " You complain," said he, " that by our gospel the world is become tu- " multuous; I answer, God be thanked for it, these " things I would have so to be; and wo to me, if such " things were not."

And the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke of the pit, ver. 2. The spirit of seduction, denoted by the smoke of the pit, produced a multitude of erroneous doctrines, that *darkened* the light of faith, signified by the *sun*, and the purity of morals, indicated by the *air*. The light of faith, which is the word of God, may well be represented by the *sun*, the great luminary of the universe, according to that of Psalm 118. v. 105. " Thy word, O Lord, is a lamp to my feet, and a light " to my paths." And as the *air* is the spring of man's respiration and life, it may be a just type of morality, which gives spiritual life and worth to all human actions. One principal design of the Reformation was, to free men from two troublesome restraints, of subjecting their understanding to the mysteries of faith, and of being bound down in their actions to the strict laws of morality. The new teachers preached up a hitherto unheard of " evangelical liberty," as they styled it, by virtue of which they were masters to model their belief and practice, as it suited their inclinations. In pursuance of this commodious doctrine, they dissected the Catholic faith, till they reduced it to a mere skeleton,

they lopt off the reality of the body and blood of Christ, in the holy eucharist, the divine christian sacrifice offered in the Mass, confession of sins, most of the sacraments, penetential exercises, several of the canonical books of the Scripture, the invocation of saints, celibacy, most of the general councils of the church, and all present church authority; they perverted the nature of justification, asserting that faith alone suffices to justify man; they made God the author of sin, and maintained the observance of the Commandments to be impossible.

These and other errors were taught by most of the modern Reformers; and they all agreed in renouncing all submission to the see of Rome.

In this manner were *the sun and air darkened*, or faith and morality obscured and perverted. For a few specimens of Luther's doctrine, take the following. "God's commandments are all equally impossible." De Lib. Christ. T. 2. fol. 4. "No sins can damn a "man, but only unbelief." De Captiv. Bab. T. 2. fol. 171. "God is just, though by his own will he lays us "under a necessity of being damned; and though he "damns those that have not deserved it." Tom. 2. fol. 434 & 466. "God works in us both good and evil." Tom. 2. fol. 44. "Christ's body is in every place no "less than the Divinity itself." Tom. 4. fol. 37.

Then for his darling principle of justification by faith, in his 11th article against Pope Leo, he says: "Believe strongly that you are absolved, and absolved "you will be, whether you have contrition or no." Again, in his 6th article: "The contrition that is "acquired by examining, recollecting, and detesting "one's sins; whereby a man calls to mind his life past "in the bitterness of his soul, reflecting on the hei-"nousness and multitude of his offences, the loss of "eternal bliss, and condemnation to eternal wo: this "contrition, I say, makes a man a hypocrite, nay, even "a greater sinner than he was before." Thus, after the most immoral life, you have a compendious method of saving yourself by simply believing that your sins are remitted through the merits of Christ. As to his

sentiments in regard to the Pope, bishops, councils, &c. hear what he says in the preface to his book *de abrogandâ Missa privatâ.* "With how many powerful "remedies and most evident Scriptures have I scarce "been able to fortify my conscience so, as to dare alone "to contradict the Pope, and believe him to be Anti-"christ, the bishops his Apostles, and the Universities "his brothel-houses." In his book *de judicio Ecclesiæ de gravi doctrina:* "Christ takes from the bishops, "doctors, and councils, both the right and power of "judging controversies, and gives them to all Chris-"tians in general." Lastly, hear his modest censure on the council of Constance and those that composed it. "All John Huss's articles were condemned at Con-"stance by Antichrist and his Apostles," meaning the Pope and Bishops, "in that synod of Satan, made up "of most wicked sophisters; and you, most holy vicar "of Christ, I tell you plainly to your face, that all "John Huss's condemned doctrines are evangelical "and Christian, but all yours are impious and diaboli-"cal." Many more instances might be brought of the head-reformer's extravagant opinions and assertions, but these may suffice.

To enumerate the errors of all the Reformers would exceed the limits of this work; I shall therefore only add the principal heads of the doctrine of Calvin and the Calvinists, viz. 1. That baptism is not necessary for salvation. 2. Likewise good works are not necessary. 3. Man has no free will. 4. Adam could not avoid his fall. 5. A great part of mankind are created to be damned, independent of their demerits. 6. Man is justified by faith alone: and that justification, once obtained, cannot be lost, even by the most atrocious crimes. 7. The true faithful are also infallibly certain of their salvation. 8. The Eucharist is no more than a figure of the body and blood of Christ.—Thus was the whole system of faith and morality overturned.

The above short *detail* shows a palpable reason, why our modern apostles set such a value on their new discovered principle of "evangelical liberty," as it opened

to them so spacious a lawn, in which they could range at their ease. The hardships of mortification, the painful restrictions of penance, were not to be admitted into the Elysian fields: the sensual appetites claimed here their right of abode. All Church authority was banished from this realm of liberty. They professed themselves judges of every thing relating to religion, and its foundations and fences they levelled at their pleasure. Tradition they totally abolished; and though they could not reject the whole canon of the Scriptures, as being universally acknowledged to be the word of God, they had however the presumption to expunge some books of it, that did not coincide with their own opinions; and the rest they assumed a right to explain as they thought fit. Hence followed various arbitrary explications of the most important texts, which became so many fountains that issued out troubled streams of doctrine. But this was a natural consequence. For, if a man consults only himself, his passions and conceits will certainly dictate to him what may serve for their own gratification, and which must of course contradict the doctrine of Revelation, which tends to bridle them. What wonder, then, if the comments and glosses of these new interpreters have so much *obscured* and disfigured the face of religion? Moreover, to complete the work, and to conciliate people's minds more easily to their innovations, they pretend to charge the old doctrine with absurdities and errors, as if Christ had suffered his Church to be totally eclipsed and lost; whereas, he had told his Apostles, and in them their successors, the pastors of his Church: *Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world*, Matt. xxviii. 20. But it plainly appeared that the objected absurdities and errors had no reality, and were no more than misrepresentations contrived on purpose.

In this view how many notorious falsehoods were published, which were still kept up, concerning the Catholic worship of relicks and images, concerning confession of sins, indulgences, purgatory, &c.? And thus again they endeavoured to throw a cloud over the face of the Catholic religion. From what has been

said, it appears then fully, how *the Sun and the air were darkened with the smoke of the pit.*

And from the smoke of the pit there came out Locusts upon the earth, ver. 3. From the smoke of the abyss is generated a swarm of *Locusts* that disperse themselves over the earth: the meaning of which is, that the Spirit of seduction denoted by the *smoke* of the abyss, raised up a number of sectaries or reformers, as they called themselves, who spread themselves into all parts of the Catholic Church. Luther was first intoxicated with this delusive spirit, which presently after insinuated itself into Carlostadius, Zuinglius, Oecolampadius, Melancton, Bucer, Muncer, Calvin, Henry VIII. of England, Cranmer, and many others. Being of the nature of *Locusts*, these Reformers were unconnected, acknowledged no subordination among themselves, and even quarrelled with one another. They all taught different doctrines, and scarce agreed in any other thing, but in their endeavours to destroy the ancient faith, and corrupt the Christian principles of morality. In this indeed they jointly exhibited a vehement eagerness equal to the voracity of locusts. "Heretics are "compared to locusts," says St. Jerome, "because lo-"custs are a species of insects extremely hurtful to "mankind, as they occasion famine, eat up the har-"vest, and even strip the trees and the vines." In cap. 13. Osee. The new doctrines, being calculated to gratify the vicious inclinations of the human heart, diffused themselves with the rapidity of an inundation. Fredrick, Elector of Saxony, John Fredrick, his successor, and Philip, Langrave of Hesse, became Luther's disciples, and their respective states followed their example. Gustavus Ericus, king of Sweden, and Christiern III. king of Denmark, declared also in favour of Lutheranism. It likewise got footing in Hungary, and spread itself by degrees into Brandenburg, Pomerania, Mecklenburgh, Holstein, &c. Poland, after tasting of a great variety of doctrines, could pitch upon none, but left to every individual the liberty of choosing for himself. Four cantons of Switzerland received Zuinglius's creed, at the conference held at Bern, in 1528.

These cantons afterwards making alliance with Geneva, exchanged their doctrine for that of Calvin. And now, of the thirteen cantons that compose the states of Switzerland, six of them are Protestant. Muncer, a disciple of Luther, deserting from his master, set up for doctor himself, and with Nicholas Stork gave birth to the sect of Anabaptists, which was propagated in Suabia and other provinces of Germany, in the Low-Countries, &c. Calvin, a man of bold, obstinate spirit, artful and indefatigable in his labours, in imitation of Luther, commenced also Reformer. He procured his new tenets to be received at Geneva, in 1541. After his death, the same doctrine was carried on by his successor, Beza, and it made its way into several provinces of France, where its professors obtained the appellation of Huguenots. It insinuated itself into some parts of Germany, Hungary, Bohemia, and became the established religion of Holland. Calvinism was also imported by John Knox into Scotland, where, under the name of Presbyterianism, it took deep root, and overspread the whole face of that kingdom. In fine, to such a degree prevailed the licentious spirit of dogmatizing, that every one thought he had an equal right with Luther, Zuinglius, or any other, to interpret the Scriptures, and form his own creed. On this principle, the different sects split into a multitude of parties, following different heads, who every day coined new religions. Thus the body of Anabaptists alone became divided into at least thirty-two different sects. By these divisions the principal leaders found themselves frustrated in the attachment of their proselytes, who upon every occasion left them to follow new teachers. Though this defection was no more than they themselves had given example of, in relinquishing the faith of their ancestors and the Catholic communion, they were nevertheless greatly mortified at it, and published their complaints. Such was even the case with Luther, the great author and patriarch of the Reformation; and he resented so much the freedom taken by Carlostadius, Oecolampadius, and Zuinglius, in preaching a different doctrine from his own, that he reviled them, according

to his custom, in the most virulent terms. Some time after, when the reforming spirit had almost reached its full growth, thus wrote Dudithius, a learned Protestant divine, in his epistle to Beza. "What sort of people "are our Protestants, straggling to and fro, and carried "about with every wind of doctrine, sometimes to this "side, sometimes to that? You may perhaps know "what their sentiments in matters of religion are to-"day; but you can never certainly tell what they will "be to-morrow. In what article of religion do these "Churches agree, which have cast off the bishop of "Rome? Examine all from top to bottom, and you "will scarce find one thing affirmed by one, which was "not immediately condemned by another for wicked "doctrine." The same confusion of opinions was described by an English Protestant, the learned Dr. Walton, about the middle of the last century, in his preface to his Polyglott, where he says, "Aristarchus hereto-"fore could scarce find seven wise men in Greece: "but with us, scarce are to be found so many idiots. "For all are doctors, all are divinely learned; there is "not so much as the meanest fanatic or jackpudding, "who does not give you his own dreams for the word "of God."

But among the reformed nations, none drank more deeply of the cup of error, than England. This country had been, during many centuries, conspicuous in the Christian world for the orthodoxy of its belief, as also for the number of saints it had sent to heaven. But by a misfortune never to be sufficiently lamented, and by an unfathomable judgment from above, its Church shared a fate which seemed the least to threaten it. The lust and avarice of one despotic sovereign threw down the fair edifice, and tore it off from the rock on which it had hitherto stood. Henry VIII. at first a valiant asserter of the Catholic Faith against Luther, giving way to violent passions, which he had not resolution to curb, renounced the supreme jurisdiction which the pope had always held in the Church, presumed to arrogate to himself that power in his own dominions, and thus gave a deadly blow to religion. He then forced his

subjects into the same fatal defection, and thus opened the way to his successors to pour in upon the kingdom the whole spirit of the reformation. Once introduced, it soon overspread the land. Being, from its nature, limited by no fixed principle, but depending upon the arbitrary determination of every private man, it has since taken a hundred different shapes, in Protestants, Presbyterians, Anabaptists, Quakers, Arians, Moravians, Hutchinsonians, Methodists, and many more. Such was the swarm of *Locusts* that eclipsed the face of religion, which had long shone so bright in that island.

In taking a general view of the infinite variety of new teachers that sprung up at this time, jarring among themselves, corrupting the genuine sources of faith and morals, and deluding their fellow-creatures with poisonous novelties, one cannot help observing with how great propriety they had been long before described by the apostle St. Jude, in the following manner: *These are clouds without water, which are carried about by winds: trees of the autumn, unfruitful, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own confusion; wandering stars*, Ep. v. 12, 13. They are first compared to *clouds without water*, or that promise water, but *are carried about by winds* without giving any; that is, these new teachers promise genuine apostolical doctrine, which they call reformation, but it is mere deceit. They are termed *autumnal trees, unfruitful, twice dead, plucked up by the roots*, that is, they are become barren Christians, bringing forth no fruit, *twice dead*, by the want of faith and morality. Like *dead trees plucked up* from the earth, they are banished out of the Church, from which they ought to receive their spiritual life and nourishment. They are like the *raging waves of the sea, foaming out their confusion*; they are turbulent, proud, rebellious against their mother, the Church, which they furiously assault with slander, calumny, and blasphemy. Lastly, like *wandering stars*, they wander about in mazes of imaginary knowledge, passing from one error to another, without knowing where to fix their steps.

All power was given to them, the locusts, *as the scor-*

tions of the earth have power, ver. 3. These locusts have peculiar qualities, not to be found in the common locusts. They have the power of scorpions, that is, a power of stinging. This allegory shows, that the reformed sects, here signified by the locusts, were empowered by the divine permission, to sting, or violently torment, those of the Catholic communion, whom they had left, and against whom they conceived, and still retain, a rancorous animosity.

And it was commanded them, the locusts, *that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree: but only the men who have not the sign of God on their foreheads*, ver. 4. The locusts, or the sects of protestants, are not allowed by almighty God to hurt *the grass of the earth*, that is, the whole body of the common faithful; nor *every green thing*, as the Greek and Latin texts express it, that is, not all the vegetable greens that shoot up higher than the grass, denoting the princes, magistrates, and others, superior in dignity to the commonalty; nor are they allowed to hurt *every tree*, or all the pastors with their clergy. In short, they are not permitted to pervert the whole of any of the three different classes of the faithful, namely, ministers of religion or the clergy, the princes and persons, and civil dignity, and the common people.

The expression however of all, or *every one*, indicates that some of all these sorts will be ensnared. In general, they will not be allowed to seduce any others of the Church's members, but *those who have not the sign of God on their foreheads*, that is, those who are not solidly fixed in their faith and morals, but suffer themselves to be influenced by their passions, by worldly views or pleasures, and who consequently have not courage to withstand the temptation, nor to fight under the banner of religion. These have not *the sign of God on their foreheads*: they cowardly give up this characteristic *sign*, the Cross of Christ, with its persecutions, self-denials, and mortifications: they go over to their enemies who seduced them, and from them learn to have a horror of imprinting that salutary mark on their foreheads, which was so much the practice of antiquity, as Tertullian in-

forms us. "At every step," says he, "whenever we "come in or go out, when we put on our clothes or "shoes, when we wash, when we sit down to table, "when we light a candle, when we go to bed—we im- "print on our foreheads the sign of the Cross." Lib. de Coron, Milit. c. 3.

From the present text of the Apocalypse under our consideration, it appears then that, though Almighty God, in the unsearchable ways of his wisdom, allows the Protestant sects to have a certain degree of power, yet in his goodness he puts a bridle to this power, and prescribes to it determinate limits, lest it should overrun too great a part of Christ's kingdom. *Hitherto shalt thou come, and shalt go no further, and here thou shalt break thy swelling waves.* Job, c. 38. v. 11. Mahometism and the Greek schism had already torn away a large body of the Catholic community; but the supreme ruler of the universe had promised, that his Church should stand as visible as if seated on a mountain*, and that Hell itself should not prevail against it†. These assurances are a secure bulwark to it, and though the Sovereign Disposer has permitted the new-generated poison of the present age to infect some part of his Church, the greater part is preserved sound and untainted, and shines forth with brighter lustre to the world. Many large countries rejected the Reformation, and steadfastly adhered to the ancient faith, and even in most of those kingdoms, which adopted the innovation, there are still remaining, by the Providence of God, some that refuse to bow their knees to Baal, and though few, like grapes remaining after the vintage, they stand as a testimony against the others who ought to have maintained the same truth with them.

Besides the above-mentioned particulars, we ought not to overlook another check which has been put upon the efforts of the Reformation. While powerful princes and great armies undertook to propagate the Protestant religion, the Almighty thought fit to inter-

* Isai. c. 2. v. 2. Dan. c. 2. v. 35.

† Matt. c. 16. v. 18.

pose, and gave to the Catholic powers sufficient strength to oppose the invasion, and has ever since supported them in such manner as to make them a match against their enemies.

And it was given unto them, the locusts, *that they should not kill them; but that they should torment them five months; and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he strikes a man*, v. 5. Here is a second curb put upon the power of the reformed societies. In the last article we saw, that their power of seducing others to embrace their doctrine was confined to those *who had not the sign of God on their foreheads*, or who by their depravity or bad dispositions lay open to such seduction.

Such was the extent of their power in the spiritual way.

Here the boundary of their temporal power is fixed.

They are not permitted to *kill them*, that is, utterly to destroy and exterminate the Catholics.

In the first heat of the Reformation, such was the violence of the Protestants, that they breathed nothing less than war and destruction. In their progress they murdered great numbers of the Catholics, demolished their Churches and monasteries, and carried devastation through the land. But the Almighty, in his eternal wisdom, had resolved to restrain their power, and by his apostle St. John had long ago published his decree, contained in the present text, that they should not proceed beyond the limits which he had fixed. Their expectations were consequently frustrated, and they were obliged to sit down with less extent of conquest than they had grasped in their thoughts. In a similar manner, Almighty God had often permitted his favourite people, the Jews, to be harassed and oppressed by the foreign nations their enemies, but he never suffered them to be extinguished.

In fine, experience shows that, notwithstanding the Protestant princes have taken such pains to extirpate the Catholic religion in their respective states, they have not been able to compass it. The Catholics have been grievously oppressed, and many even put to death; nevertheless, though much reduced in some

of those countries, by the divine protection, they still there subsist.

But it was given unto them, the locusts, *that they should torment them five months.* The kind of torment here meant, is expressed in the subsequent words: *And their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he strikes a man.* Certainly a very sharp torment or pain, to be like that occasioned by the sting of a scorpion. This comparison shows plainly that, though the power of the Protestants was limited by the Providence of God, they were nevertheless allowed to molest and bitterly persecute those of the Catholic communion. They were restrained, as we have just now seen, from exterminating the body of the Catholics, but by their persecutions, seditions, and wars, they cut off many, and the rest were made to suffer extreme hardships and miseries. In those countries, where the sovereigns embraced the Reformation, they generally seized upon the revenues of the Church, and thus reduced the clergy to the pinching anguishes of want. The bulk of the Catholics were forced to adopt the religion of their princes, or fly their native country, or in fine, be doomed to lie under the most heavy oppression. Are not these sufferings well compared to *the sting of a scorpion?* Besides, who is ignorant of the cruel persecuting laws, that were in those times enacted in most of the Protestant states against the Catholic religion? Among the rest, who is not acquainted with the severe laws of England and Ireland? They are such, as to be owned by those of their own people who have a sense of humanity, to be barbarous, to be a scandal to the Christian religion, and a disgrace to civilized nations. In consequence of these statutes, how many persons have been stript of their estates? How many individuals have been imprisoned, banished, even put to death? How many families have been reduced to beggary, and ruined? Are not such hardships and oppressions to be deemed severe, and as acute in the pain they cause, as *the stinging of a scorpion?*

It is said, this torture was to last *five months.* Here the Almighty prescribes a term to that great severity,

the Protestants were permitted to exercise against the true servants of God. This term is five months, or 150 days, giving 30 days to every month, which way of reckoning by round numbers is usual with the prophets. But it is to be observed, that days in the prophetic style are sometimes used for years. Thus it is in that celebrated prophecy in Daniel of seventy weeks, or 490 days, understood by all the interpreters to mean 490 years, which were to run from the term mentioned in that prophecy to the death of Christ the Messiah. Dan. ix. 24. Another instance of the same way of reckoning occurs in the book of Ezekiel, where God speaks to that prophet in this manner: *Thou shalt take upon thee the iniquity of the house of Juda forty days. A day for a year, yea, a day for a year I have appointed to thee.* Ezek. iv. 6. On this principle, therefore, as the space of five months, taken according to the common acceptation, gives too short a period to comprise all the transactions mentioned in our text concerning the Reformation, we shall count 150 years for the 150 days contained in the five months; during which time the locusts were empowered to *sting*, that is, the Protestants were allowed to torment so rigorously the Catholics. If then the 150 years be counted from the year 1525, about which time those violences began to take place, they will bring us to the year 1675. Some part of the history of the Reformation relating to this period, has been presented to us in the preceding texts, and the rest will appear, as we shall presently see, in the subsequent verses of our prophetic author.

And in those days men shall seek death, and shall not find it: and they shall desire to die, and death shall fly from them, ver. 6. Here is a lively picture of the extreme miseries that the Catholics suffered in consequence of the violence and fury with which the Reformation was carried on. And does not the history of those times evince the truth of it? On one side, many finding themselves rifled and stript of all that belonged to them, actuated by the *sting* of misery, equal to that of the *scorpion*, took up arms to recover by force what they could not hope for by any other means. The

poor and distressed also, who received their subsistence from the charitable and constant liberalities of the monasteries, being deprived of all resource by the dissolution of those houses, drew courage from despair,

Una salus victis nullam sperare salutem.——Virgil.

Despair of life, the means of living shows.——Dryden.

and fled to arms, though unjustifiably, and, joining with the others, *sought for death* in battle, rather than die by hunger, though perhaps it was not their lot *to find that death.*

Likewise how miserable was the condition of that multitude of religious people of both sexes, who were ejected from their houses, and robbed of all their possessions! They had abandoned the world, and consecrated themselves to God in solitary retreats. Unacquainted with manual labour, and unaccustomed to every art of providing subsistence, they solely attended to the service of God, and to the preparing of themselves for another world, depending entirely for the support of present life on the pious benefactions of those persons, who, to promote the divine worship and all the heroic virtues of the Christian religion, had endowed those houses with suitable revenues. But now a storm, like a hurricane, rose and burst upon them. One would have thought that an army of Goths or Danes had invaded the land. The recluses saw themselves assaulted by brutish ruffians, and forcibly driven out of their sanctuaries. They saw their Churches violated, and, together with their houses, plundered and pulled down to the ground. Thus were those ancient nurseries of piety and learning reduced to a heap of ruins; a lasting monument of the spirit that guided the Reformation. Such were the extravagances of fanaticism and violence at that period, that not a few were scandalized, even of those who favoured the change of religion*.

* See Stowe's Annals, Fuller's and Collier's Church Histories.

Thus, for instance, Sir John Denham, speaking of the demolition of monasteries in England, cries out:

> Who sees these dismal heaps but will demand,
> What barbarous invader sack'd the land!
> But when he hears, no Goth, no Turk, did bring
> This desolation, but a Christian king:
> When nothing but the name of zeal appears
> 'Twixt our best actions, and the worst of theirs,
> What does he think our sacrilege would spare,
> Since these th' effects of our devotion are?
>
> Cooper's Hill.

Let us hear another Protestant writer: "England "sate weeping," says Camden, "to see her wealth "exhausted, her coin debased, and her abbeys demo- "lished, which were the monuments of ancient piety." Introd. to the Annals of Queen Eliz.

By such inhuman proceedings, a great number of religious men and women saw themselves stript of every commodity of life. They saw themselves exposed to the inclemency of the weather, to the distresses of want, to the insults of an insolent populace worked up to enthusiasm; in fine, they found themselves turned out into a wide world, without knowing which way to direct their steps. What wonder, if in this destitute forlorn condition, they should rather *desire to die*, than drag on so wretched a life? Had the executioner been sent instead of a commissioner, and required the lives of all those who refused to sacrifice their conscience to the new religion, they would have esteemed themselves happy in acquiring the crown of martyrdom. But to be exposed to all sorts of temptations, to lasting wretchedness, and to see the Church of God trampled under foot, were more cruel afflictions to them than death. These, however, they were condemned to bear, and to be deprived of the blessing of giving up their lives. *They desired to die, and death fled from them.*

And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle, v. 7. Here is expressed the spirit of sedition and rebellion that animated the Reformers and their proselytes. Luther proclaimed himself the lead-

er in this as well as other articles of the new discipline, and he levelled his first attacks against the Church. He set out with inveighing against all Church government, he declaimed against the clergy, and especially against the superiority of the Pope, though but a little before he had professed all obedience to him. Having gained for disciple and protector, John Frederick, Elector of Saxony, he kept no further measures, but declared open war against the bishops, and the whole ecclesiastic order. In his rage he composed a book on the subject, in which he said: "All those who will ven- "ture their lives, their estates, their honour, and their "blood, in so Christian a work, as to root out all bi- "shopricks and bishops, who are the ministers of Sa- "tan, and to pluck up by the roots all their authority "and jurisdiction in the world; these persons are the "true children of God, and obey his commandments." Contra statum Ecclesiæ et falso nominatum ordinem Episcoporum. Again, in his book against Sylvester Prieras: "If," says he, "we dispatch thieves by the "gallows, highwaymen by the sword, heretics by fire; "why do we not rather attack with all kinds of arms "these masters of perdition, these cardinals, these "Popes, and all this sink of the Romish Sodom, which "corrupts without ceasing the Church of God, and "wash our hands in their blood." Thus preached the new religionist, nor did he cease till he got the bishops expelled from Saxony and Hesse, and their authority extinguished.

Not content with having thrown off contemptuously the spiritual authority of the pope, the bishops, and of the whole Church, Luther next attempted to subvert the temporal power of princes. The new teachers totally differed from the primitive preachers of the Gospel. These, during their whole ministry, had before their eyes the charge which Christ gave to his apostles. *Behold, I send you*, said he, *as sheep in the midst of wolves*, Matt. x. 16. Which they all understood as an order to preserve the meekness and gentleness of *sheep*, whatever *wolves* or persecutors they might meet with. And this rule they invariably followed. But Lu-

ther, though at first he professed an aversion to violence, finding the way of patience did not succeed, soon altered his maxims. "The Gospel," he then said, and the rest of the reformers said the same after him, "the "Gospel has always caused disturbances, and blood "is requisite for its establishment." De serv. arb. When, therefore, he had done as much as he was able, to abolish the clergy, canon law, and the universities, he then proceeded to attack the emperor, and temporal princes, both by his writings and preaching. "You "must know," said he, "that from the beginning of "the world to this day, it has ever been a rare thing to "find a wise prince; but more rare to find one that was "honest: for commonly they are the greatest fools and "knaves in the world." De Sæculari Protest. Again; "You must know, my good lords," said he, "that God "will have it so, that your subjects neither can, nor "will, nor ought any longer to endure your tyrannical "governments." Contra Rusticos. Nay, even he could not refrain from expressing the same contempt and rebellious disposition towards his own patron and protector, John Frederick, elector of Saxony; having been slighted, as he thought, by his highness. "If it "is lawful for me," said Luther, "for the sake of "Christian liberty, not only to neglect, but to trample "under my feet the pope's decrees, the canons of coun-"cils, the laws and mandates of the emperor himself, "and of all princes; think you, I shall value your or-"ders so much, as to take them for laws?" Contra Ambr. Catharin.

These sorts of lessons found easy entrance into the minds of people, who had already drunk plentifully of the spirit of "evangelical liberty." Their dispositions were soured and worked up by this inflammatory doctrine of their ministers to such a degree, that they were ready for any enterprise of sedition and rebellion. Erasmus thus describes them: "I saw them come "forth from their sermons with fierce looks, and "threatening countenances," like men "that just come "from hearing bloody invectives, and seditious "speeches." Accordingly we found "these evangelic-

" al people always ready to rise in arms, and equally as " good at fighting as at disputing." How different is this spirit from that of the first ages of Christianity! The faithful then learned from the apostles and their successors, no other doctrine but the doctrine of patience, humility, meekness, obedience to the sovereign powers; and these lessons they invariably adhered to. They said: " Our hopes are not fixed on the present " world, and therefore we make no resistance to the " executioner that comes to strike us." S. Justin. Apol. 2. ad Imper. Anton pium. They said: " We adore " one only God, but in all other things we cheerfully " obey you," the emperors. Ibid. They said again: " We Christians pray to God, that he may grant to the " emperors a long life, a peaceable reign, safety at " home, victorious arms, a faithful senate, virtuous " subjects, universal peace, and every thing that a man " and emperor can desire." Tertul. Apol. In fine, the heats occasioned by Luther's seditious doctrine were so much fomented and increased by his disciples and other new reformers, that they soon kindled into a flame. The peasants in Germany rose up in arms, flocked together, and *like horses prepared unto war*, they proceeded in a body, carrying devastation through the provinces of Suabia, Franconia, and Alsatia, and ransacked many of the imperial towns. The ringleaders of this multitude, chiefly composed of Anabaptists, were Muncer and Phiffer. Muncer pretended he had received from God " the sword of Gideon," in order to depose idolatrous magistrates, and to compel the world to acknowledge the new kingdom of Jesus Christ. These fanatic insurgents in their progress plundered and burned churches, monasteries, and castles; killed priests, monks, and noblemen. The elector of Saxony and other princes, to put a stop to these disorders and desolation, confederated together, and joining their forces, cut off and dispersed some parties of the rebels, and defeated the chief body of them at Frankhusen, with great slaughter, in 1525. Muncer and Phiffer, the chiefs, being taken, were executed a few days after.

No part of the German empire was free from these

tumults. The people were universally intoxicated with the notion of reforming religion, and bent upon removing such magistrates as would not conform to their new systems. At Erford they degraded and secured all the officers of the town. At Frankfort, after having pillaged the churches, and banished the clergy, they expelled the old senators, committed the government of the city to twenty-four commoners, and made a new set of laws, composed from the doctrine of Luther. Their brethren in Cologne, Mentz, and Triers, had also taken up arms for the same purpose, but failed in their attempts. Such was the extremes of licentiousness the people proceeded to at this period from their new conceived notion of "liberty," that the emperor Charles V found it very difficult to stem the torrent, nor could he effectually compass it till many years after. These transactions may be seen more at large in Sledian, Cochlæus, and other historians.

The Lutherans of Germany, who received the name of Protestants from their protesting against a decree made in favour of the Catholic religion in the Diet held at Spires, in 1529, drew up in opposition to it, their confession of faith, called the Augsburgh Confession, and entered into a league offensive and defensive at Smalstald, against the emperor and catholic princes of Germany. Luther had sounded the trumpet of war, and set all Germany in a flame. The heads of this formidable league were the electors of Saxony and Brandenburgh, the landgrave of Hesse, the dukes of Wittemburgh and Lunenburgh, and the prince of Anhalt. Allured by the boundless liberty and enjoyment of the church-possessions, which they acquired by the reformation, they resolved to secure them by the point of the sword. They therefore assembled troops, and brought into the field an army of seventy thousand men, commanded by the elector of Saxony, and the landgrave of Hesse, and a hundred and twelve pieces of cannon. Some other German princes, besides the above-mentioned, either joined them personally, or sent them forces. They likewise received succours from the imperial towns of Augsburgh, Ulm, Strasburgh, and Frankfort. Thus

they were prepared to depose the emperor Charles V. and to extirpate from Germany the Catholic Faith, which had been the established religion of the empire for many ages past. The eyes of all Europe were intent upon the issue of this war. The emperor, with a much smaller army, marched with resolution against them, engaged them near the Elbe, and gained a complete victory, in 1547. The two generals, the elector of Saxony, and the landgrave of Hesse, were taken prisoners. Thus was the Catholic religion secured in the empire, and Protestantism, though checked, kept its ground.

A similar scene was acted in Switzerland, where Zuinglius had introduced the reformation, as we have already related. The reformed Cantons, not content with having themselves adopted Zuinglianism, would also force it upon the other Cantons that remained Catholic. This occasioned a war to ensue, and a battle was fought, in which the Protestants were defeated, and Zuinglius himself at their head slain, in 1531.

Calvin's reformation at Geneva begun by ejecting the prince Bishop of the place, and dispossessing him of his sovereignty and temporal dominions. Calvin, who modelled the state of Geneva, declared himself an enemy to monarchical government, and ever commended the advantages of a commonwealth. "They are," said he, "beside their wits, quite void of sense and understanding, who desire to live under absolute monarchies; for it cannot be but that order and policy must decay where one man holds such an extent of government." Comment. in Dan. c. 2. v. 39. By degrees he expressed more openly his aversion to Kings, and endeavoured to disgrace their characters by the most scurrilous abuse. "These Kings," says he, "are in a manner all of them a set of blockheads, and brutish men." Ibid. c. 6. v. 3. Thus he trod upon the steps, and imitated the language of his forerunner Luther. Again; "princes," says Calvin, "forfeit their power when they oppose God, in opposing the reformation; and it is better in such cases, to spit in their faces than to obey." Ibid. c. 6. v. 22. What can be

the purport of such doctrine, but to inspire a contempt for sovereigns, and to encourage the people to cast off their government, under the cloak of religion?

Theodore Beza, Calvin's scholar and successor at Geneva, supported his master's doctrine, and enforced it by his own writings, as may be seen in the preface to his translation of the New Testament; and again in his book, "Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos," where he says; "We must obey kings, for God's sake, when they obey "God;" but otherwise, "as the vassal loses his fief or "tenure, if he commit felony, so does the king lose his "right and realm also:" thus speaks our modern Junius Brutus. In this same work may be seen a hundred other assertions of the same nature, the natural tendency of which can be no other, but to arm subjects against their sovereign, and to introduce anarchy and confusion into the world. How different is the doctrine of these two modern apostles from that of the ancient great apostles SS. Peter and Paul! *Be ye subjects*, says St. Peter, *to every human creature for God's sake: whether it be to the king, as excelling; or to governors, as sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of the good.* Ep. 1. c. 2. v. 13, 14. *Let every soul*, says St. Paul, *be subject to higher powers: for there is no power, but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God. Therefore he that resists the power, resists the ordinance of God. And they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation.* Ep. ad. Rom. xii. 1, 2.

Geneva, having settled the plan of her principles according to the instructions of Calvin and Beza, became a school of rebellion to the western parts of Europe, and the principal nursery of the civil wars in France. This country soon found its bowels convulsed by the poisonous seeds of the reformation, that had clandestinely been sown and taken deep root, in Dauphiné, Gascony, Languedoc, and other provinces. In 1560, the Calvinists, or Huguenots, formed what is called "the conspiracy "of Amboise," which was a scheme to seize the person of Francis II. King of France, and to murder the Duke of Guise and his brother the Cardinal of Lorrain, who had the chief management of affairs in the king-

dom, and were attached to the Catholic religion. They had prepared a body of troops for the purpose; but the plot was discovered and prevented from taking effect. However, a civil war broke out in 1562, in which the Prince of Condé was declared chief of the Huguenots. This great general at the head of a body of them, surprised and took the city of Orleans, while other Protestant corps made themselves masters of Rouen, and severel other towns. But the Constable Montmorency and the Duke of Guise advancing against them at the head of the Catholics, for Charles IX. who had succeeded Francis II. a battle ensued near the town of Dreux, in which the Huguenots, who gave the attack, were defeated, and their commander, the Prince of Condé, taken prisoner.

Though the Protestants had thus miscarried in their rebellion against their sovereign, yet Beza, who for his warmth in the cause had accompanied them, and been present at the battle of Dreux, boasted of that battle, as having served to lay the foundation of the reformation in France. Thus he addressed queen Elizabeth in the preface to his translation of the New Testament: "Upon which day," the day of the battle at Dreux, "two "years since, the nobility and gentry of France, under "the command of his excellency the prince of Condé, "being assisted with your majesty's auxiliary troops, "and some others from the princes of Germany, laid "the first foundation of the true reformed religion in "France, with their own blood." He in the same place commends the rebellious transactions of the Huguenots at Meaux, Orleans, &c. and glories in having had a share in them. "Which I speak," says he, "the more freely, "because I myself, as it pleased God, was present at "most of those deliberations and actions."

The year after the battle at Dreux, the Duke of Guise was assassinated by Poltrot, a fanatic Calvinist. Notwithstanding the bad success the Huguenots had met with, they resolved not to rest, till they should compel the king to come into their own terms. They therefore contrived another scheme to seize his person, on his going from Meaux to Paris: but the design be-

ing discovered and frustrated, the civil war recommenced, and they were vanquished a second time near St. Dennis, in 1567. They were worsted again at Jarnac in 1569, and the same year were overthrown in a very bloody engagement at Moncontour.

Many were the insurrections and rebellions of the Calvinists in France in the subsequent reigns, which created infinite perplexities to the kings, and produced inexpressible calamities in that kingdom. It is sufficient in this place to have shown their origin from the principles of the reformation, and their first progress. And what has been said, is no more than is acknowledged by Protestants themselves, of other sects. Thus are the Calvinists described by Dr. Heylin, a learned Protestant of the Church of England, in his Cosmography, book I. "Rather than their discipline "should not be admitted, and the episcopal govern- "ment destroyed in all the Churches of Christ, they "were resolved to depose kings, ruin kingdoms, and "to subvert the fundamental constitutions of all civil "states." When people proceed upon such schemes of violence, can they wonder, that princes, or their officers, in their wrath, sometimes retaliate upon them? Violence necessarily gives provocation, which in its turn exerts itself, though perhaps by unjustifiable methods. When sovereigns perceive their lives to be in danger from conspiracies, when they see their states ransacked, and thrown into confusion by the arms of rebellious subjects, can we be surprised if these sovereigns, without consulting religion, sometimes repel the evil by rough and cruel means? Such was the so much talked of massacre of the Huguenots, at Paris, and other places in France, in 1572, on St. Bartholomew's day, in the reign of Charles IX.

The massacre also of the Protestants in Ireland in 1641, has been often objected against the Catholic Church. When people are driven to despair by excessive hardship and oppression, and even threatened with utter extirpation, what wonder if an insurrection follows? Such was the case with the Irish Catholics. The insurgents even were not the body of

Catholics; they were no more than an exasperated rabble in the province of Ulster, who acted against the inclination of the community, and in opposition to the exhortations of their clergy; and, indeed, all such violences are utterly condemned by the Catholic doctrine. It is also clear from authentic records and testimonies, that this massacre has been exceedingly exaggerated, and that not one hundredth part of the number were murdered, that were reported. These particulars are proved at length by a learned Protestant writer of the kingdom of Ireland, in a book, entitled: "The trial of "the cause of the Roman Catholics.——Dublin, 1761."

The nature of Calvinism being so opposite to the Catholic religion, it produced in its proselytes a rancorous aversion to every thing belonging to the latter communion. The consequence of this could be no other, when once they had arms in their hands, but to spread desolation, and exercise cruelties upon those whose religion they hated. And such was the real fact. It is impossible to read the history of the Calvinists, without being shocked at the disorders and barbarities committed by them. It is computed, that in the course of those wars, they destroyed twenty thousand churches. In the province of Dauphiné only, they killed two hundred and fifty-five priests, and one hundred and twelve monks and friars, and burnt nine hundred towns and villages. If the maxims of Calvinism warranted such proceedings, could its gospel be the gospel of Christ?

As Beza had been the chief instrument of propagating Calvinism in France, and a great agent in fomenting the seditions and combustions it occasioned in that country; in like manner Knox, another disciple of Calvin, carried the same doctrine into Scotland, where he planted it by sedition and rebellion, by fire and sword. He, Buchanan, Goodman, and other associates, having consulted together, agreed to reform the Church of Scotland according to the standard of Geneva. When a sufficient party was formed, they began their work of reformation by murdering cardinal Beaton in 1546, the principal supporter of the Catholic religion. Knox harangued the people, declaimed against the ancient faith

and clergy, and inflamed the multitude to that degree of rage, that they immediately ran to the churches, overturned the altars, defaced the pictures, broke to pieces the statues, carried off the ornaments, and then proceeded against the monasteries, which they almost laid level with the ground. This sort of work Knox carried on in different parts of Scotland. In a little time these fanatics, who were styled Presbyterians, finding themselves growing numerous, rose up, *like horses prepared unto battle*, in rebellion against the queen regent, and bringing armies into the field committed horrible disorders. They were supported by queen Elizabeth of England; and having convoked a general assembly of the party, they concluded, conformably to the opinion of Knox, who declared it lawful, to depose the queen mother from her regency. After her death, which happened in the year 1560, queen Mary being then in France, they enacted a law, by the instigation of Knox, prohibiting the exercise of the Catholic religion in Scotland. They got this law afterwards confirmed by a Parliament in 1567, and they excluded the queen from all government. The succeeding calamities which this unfortunate queen and her kingdom sustained from that seditious set of people, who were grown too strong to be controlled, are too well known to need any relation. It is equally notorious, that the spirit of presbyterianism, at first confined to the north, insinuated itself by degrees into the neighbouring kingdom of England, where it soon created divisions among the people, and raised such commotions, as in the end overturned the state, and brought a king to the block. The world has too much experienced, that kings, queens, bishops, and priests, could never be allowed a share in their friendship.

Lutheranism having insinuated itself into the Netherlands, several states of that country confederated together at Utrecht, in 1578, and agreed to twenty articles, as the foundation of their union, the first of which was, "to support one another against all force that "should be exercised upon them in the king's name, "or for religion." This league was confirmed at the

Hague, under the auspices of the Prince of Orange, in 1581. The scheme was, to renounce all obedience to their liege lord, the king of Spain, and to withdraw themselves entirely from his power; which they did by a public edict. Pursuant to this, they proceeded to break the king's seals, to pull down his arms, to take possession of his lands and rents, and to coin money in their own names. With the same usurped authority, they seized the Church livings, and abolished the Catholic religion. Such were the steps taken under the standard of Lutheranism, but when the Calvinistical doctrine got footing, the flame spread with the utmost violence. The people, regardless of all laws by which they were bound to their sovereign, take up arms, and mutiny every where against his magistrates. The Churches are plundered, the religious men and women are expelled by force from their monasteries, which are rifled and, pulled down. To quell these rebellious insurrections, and to put a stop to these disorders, Philip, king of Spain, to whom the Low-Countries belonged, sent a body of Spanish forces under the command of the Duke of Alva. A bloody war ensued, in which the Prince of Orange was the chief director of the affairs of the confederates. The Duke reduced ten of the revolted provinces to their former obedience and subjection to the king of Spain; but seven others, since styled the "United Provinces," found means to maintain their ground against the Spanish efforts, and formed themselves into an independent commonwealth, the only government that Calvinism admits of.

In England, Denmark, and Sweden, the Reformation was introduced by the kings themselves, who compelled their subjects to receive it. Thus ushered in by the supreme temporal power, it stood in no need of insurrections and tumults among the people, to gain admittance: the sword and authority of the prince performed the whole function. Those individuals who dared to continue in the practice of the ancient religion, were declared traitors to their sovereign, and rebels to the state.

Thus much may be sufficient for the explanation of our text, that *the shapes of the locusts were like horses prepared unto battle.*

And on their heads, the heads of the locusts, *were as it were crowns like gold*, v. 7. The locusts bore upon their heads something that resembled crowns, which crowns appeared to be of gold. This allusion points at the pride and presumption of the new sectaries, who assumed to themselves the high function of preaching the gospel, without having any lawful mission; they pretended to be the true ministers of God, without showing any credentials from him; they set up for apostles of Christ, but could not produce his commission. Luther styled himself "by the grace of God, "ecclesiastes or preacher of Whittemberg." Epist. ad falso nominat. Epis. He treated with the utmost contempt the Pope and the bishops, as we have already seen. As to the fathers of the Church, he said, "they "were all blind." Lib. de serv. Arbit. And "he "concerned not himself what Ambrose, Augustin, the "councils, or practices of ages said." Lib. contra Regem Angliæ. Then he boasted of his own merits: "The Gospel," says he, "has been so fully preached "by us, that even in the times of the Apostles it was "not so well understood." Serm. de Evers. Jerusalem. In this manner Luther set *a crown* upon his own head, and the whole troop of Reformers after him crowned themselves in the same manner. Such *crowns*, the work of self-conceit and arrogance, could not be real crowns, but only *as it were crowns*, that is, the mere appearances of such.

It was said of the Apostles of Christ: *Thou shalt establish them princes over all the earth.* Psalm 44. v. 17. The conversion of numberless nations to Christ by their ministry, had merited to them the title of princes, and the right of wearing crowns. The Reformers claimed the same honours. But the crowns of the Apostles were of pure *gold*, because their doctrine, which flowed from Christ, the source, was pure and genuine. Whereas, the doctrine of our modern apostles, being derived from no other source but their own invention, and being contrary to the doctrine preserved in that Church, which was planted and formed by the primitive Apostles; such new-devised doctrine, I say,

can be nothing else but error and delusion, and consequently their apparent crowns are not of pure but of counterfeit *gold*, or, as the text expresses it, they are *like to gold*, or really mere tinsel.——These *crowns* on their heads also show clearly their general spirit of independency.

And their faces, the faces of the locusts, *were as the faces of men*, v. 7. The locusts appeared to St. John with faces of men. Here is marked out the delusive appearance of the modern sectaries. They pretended that faith had been adulterated, and that the morals of mankind were guided by erroneous principles. They therefore assumed the province of rectifying both, by preaching up a "Reformation." For this purpose these "Reformers" framed new systems of religion. They proposed each of them their own creed for settling the articles of belief, and a new plan of morality for the direction of human actions. All this was devised, as they alleged, to correct the defects and errors of the Catholic doctrine. Thus they put on *the faces of men*, that is, they announced themselves as teachers of orthodox and holy doctrine: and by this means they deluded those *who had not the sign of God upon their foreheads*, that is, the careless and vicious. But it soon appeared that these *faces of men* were no more than vizards resembling human faces, that the specious name of "Reformation" was only a mask made use of to instil their treacherous doctrine with more ease and subtlety. The mask was soon removed, and their doctrine, when applied to the true criterion, was evidently discovered to be false. It disagreed with that which Christ had deposited with his Apostles, and which he charged them to impart to the rest of mankind; at the same time assuring them and their successors that, in order to enable them to execute their commission with fidelity, *he would himself be with them to the end of the world*. Matt. xxviii. 20. And that *the Spirit of truth should abide with them for ever*. John xiv. 16, 17. That the new invented maxims were of bad tendency, the effects soon proved. Instead of a reformation, they produced a general licentiousness. This appeared in

the seditions, insurrections, and violences committed on all sides. Complaints were also heard from all quarters, of excessive looseness of manners. The Lutheran magistrates of several imperial cities in Germany, petitioned the Emperor, Charles V. to re-establish by his authority auricular confession, as a check upon the then prevailing libertinism. And indeed it was highly probable, that from the pretended "Christian liberty" which was then preached, a deluge of vice would have diffussed itself, had not the civil power stept in to stem it. The reformers themselves were so ashamed of the progress of the immorality among their proselytes, that they could not help complaining against it. Thus spoke Luther: "Men are now more revenge ul, cove-"tous, and licentious, than they were ever in the papa-"cy." Postil. super Evang. Dom. 1. adv. Thus again: "Heretofore, when we were seduced by the "Pope, every man willingly performed good works: "but now no man says or knows any thing else, but "how to get all to himself by exactions, pillage, theft, "lying, usury, &c." Postil. super Evang. Dom. 26. post Trin. Calvin wrote in the same strain: "Of so "many thousands," said he, "who, renouncing Pope-"ry, seemed eagerly to embrace the gospel, how few "have amended their lives? Nay, what else did the "greater part pretend to, but by shaking off the yoke "of superstition, to give themselves more liberty to "follow all kinds of licentiousness." Lib. de Scandalis. Others of the German reformers repeated the same reproaches. But have those a right to complain of an inundation, who have themselves cut open the banks of the river? Dr. Heylen, in his history of the Reformation, complains also of "the great increase of "viciousness" in England, in the reforming reign of Edward VI. Erasmus, though no zealous advocate for the Catholics, could not help observing the degeneracy of morals brought on by the change of religion: "Take a view," says he, "of this evangelical people," the Protestants——"Perhaps 'tis my misfortune; but "I never yet met with one who does not appear chang-"ed for the worse." Epist. ad. Vultur. Necc. And

again: "Some persons," says he, "whom I knew for-merly innocent, harmless, and without deceit, no sooner have I seen joined to that sect," the Protestants, "but they begun to talk of wenches, to play at dice, to leave off prayers, being grown extremely worldly, most impatient, revengeful, vain, like vipers tearing one another.—I speak by experience." Ep. ad Fratres infer. Germaniæ.

And they, the locusts, *had hair as the hair of women*, v. 8. In describing the heads of the locusts, from the forepart or the face, which resembles that of man, St. John proceeds to the back part, which is found covered with *hair like women's hair*. This latter allusion, unhappily for the sectaries, betrays too plainly their sensual disposition towards that sex, their shameful doctrine on that score, and the scandalous example of their practice. Luther, in despite of the vow he had solemnly made to God of keeping continency, married, and married a nun, equally bound as himself to that sacred religious promise. But, as St. Jerome says, "It is rare to find a heretic that loves chastity." Luther's example had indeed been anticipated by Carlostadius, a priest, and ring-leader of the Sacramentarians, who had married a little before; and it was followed by most of the heads of the Reformation. Zuinglius, a priest, and chief of the sect that bore his name, took a wife. Bucer, a religious man of the order of St. Dominick, became Lutheran, left his cloister, and married a nun. Oecolampadius, a Brigittin monk, became Zuinglian, and also married. Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, had also his wife. Peter Martyr, a canon regular, embraced the doctrine of Calvin, but followed the example of Luther, and married a nun. Ochin, general of the Capuchins, became Lutheran, and also married. Thus the principal leaders in the Reformation went forth preaching the new gospel, with two marks upon them, apostacy from faith, and open violation of the most sacred vows. The passion of lust, it is also well known, hurried Henry VIII. of England into a separation from the Catholic Church, and ranked him among the Reformers.

As Luther foresaw the scandal that would rise from his own and such like sacrilegious marriages, he pre-

pared the world for it, by writing against the celibacy of the clergy, and against all religious vows. He proclaimed that all such vows "were contrary to faith, to "the commands of God, and to evangelical liberty." De votis Monast. He said again: "God disapproves "of such a vow," of living in continency, "equally as "if I should vow to become the mother of God, or to "create a new world." Ep. ad Wolfgang. Reisemb. And again: "To attempt to live unmarried, is plainly "to fight against God." Ibid. How does such doctrine agree with the commendations our Saviour gives to celibacy? when speaking of it, he says: *All men take not this word, but they to whom it is given.* Matt. xix. Or with the advice of St. Paul, who being himself unmarried, said: *I say to the unmarried and widows: it is good for them if they so continue, even as I.* 1 Cor. vii. 8. And this has been practised through all the ages of Christianity. But when men give a loose to the depravity of nature, what wonder if the most scandalous practices ensue? Accordingly, besides what has been above-mentioned, a striking instance of this kind appeared in the license granted in 1539 to Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, to have two wives at once: which license was signed by Luther, Melancton, Bucer, and five other divines. On another hand, a wide door was laid open to another species of scandal: The doctrine of the Reformation admitted divorces in the marriage state, in certain cases, contrary to the doctrine of the Gospel, and even allowed the parties thus separated to marry other wives and other husbands.

And their teeth, the teeth of the locusts, *were as of lions*, v. 8. In the preceding article we had a figure of the incontinency of the reformers; here we are presented with a symbol of their avarice. It was not sufficient to have named them *locusts*, and to intimate their ravenous temper by the greediness of those insects: they are here represented with *teeth of lions*, ready to devour with violence whatever prey they can come at. What is more known, than the truth of this representation? Did not the Protestants, wherever they got footing, pillage the Churches, seize the Church-possessions,

destroy the monasteries, and appropriate to themselves the revenues? Such was the case in Germany, in Holland, in France, in Switzerland, in Scotland, as we have seen in relating the Protestant wars in those countries. In England likewise, what a scene of rapine! Without descending to a detail of particulars, it may be sufficient to say, that in the reign of Henry VIII. were suppressed no less than 645 monasteries, 90 colleges, 110 hospitals, and of chantries and free chapels 2374, Baker's Chron. the lands and revenues of all which were confiscated to the king. Is not this, to devour with *lions teeth*? The same course of rapine was carried on under Edward VI. which swept away what remained from the preceding reign. Dr. Heylin, in the preface to his history of the reformation, speaking of this prince and his reign, says: "Such was the rapacity of the times, and the unfortu- "nateness of his condition, that his minority was abused "to many acts of spoil and rapine, even to an high "degree of sacrilege, to the raising of some, and the "enriching of others, without any manner of improve- "ment to his own estate" The hungry courtiers began their sacrilegious rapine, by plundering the images and shrines of the saints, and seizing upon the ornaments, plate, and jewels, of the churches These spoils not being sufficient to glut their *leonine* avidity, they invaded the bishoprics, which they stripped of many of their possessions. The detail of all which may be seen in the above-mentioned history of Dr. Heylin.

In Sweden, Gustavus Erickson introduced the Lutheran reformation, and seized the Church-lands and revenues, leaving the clergy but a slender maintenance. The same did Christiern III. king of Denmark, in his dominions. Thus, robbing people of their property, demolishing their habitations, public buildings, &c. which violences in all civilized countries are punished with death, were in the course of the reformation practised with impunity; and the perpetrators gratified their avarice, which they masked with the pretended vindication of religion. The testaments of the dead, which even among heathens are sacred, were in these times *contemptuously* violated, and the donations, which the

testators had dedicated to the service of God and to the relief of the sick and distressed, were scandalously diverted to other purposes.

And they had, the locusts had, *breast-plates, as breast-plates of iron*, v. 9. In the two last articles we saw the spirit of incontinency and avarice of the reformers, and their societies; here we are presented with a picture of their obstinacy, under the figure of iron breast-plates. Whoever is not joined with the Protestants in their persuasion, knows full well that their obstinacy is incredible in defending their doctrine; that for that purpose they are not ashamed to make use of any arguments, though ever so frivolous, inconsistent, or absurd, and to asperse the Catholic communion with slanders, misrepresentations, and calumnies. It also appears from the account we have before given of the wars of the Reformation, that the protestants were always ready to maintain their new adopted religion at any rate, even with arms, and at the risk of their lives. In that view the protestant princes of Germany entered into a league offensive and defensive against the emperor Charles V. rose up in arms, nor could they be prevailed upon to sit down quiet, till they had established the reformation. Thus they carried *breast-plates of iron*. Many other wars succeeded in Germany, between the Catholics and protestants. After a similar manner in other countries, where the Reformation got footing, its abettors so obstinately supported it by sedition, disturbance, and war, that no peace could be purchased from them, till their religion was admitted and ratified by the laws of the respective kingdoms. Such was the case not only in Germany, but in Holland, in several provinces of France, in Scotland, &c. And I believe every one presumes such would be more or less the case at this day, if any danger threatened the Reformation.

And the noise of their wings, the wings of the locusts, *was as the noise of chariots of many horses running to battle*, v. 9. Here the prophet points at the turbulent, murmuring, clamorous disposition of the reformed, properly expressed by the noise of the wings of the locust, which was as loud as *the noise of chariots of many*

horses running to war. Did not that inflammatory spirit of uneasiness, loud murmur, and sedition, appear in all those kingdoms where the reformation was received? How often has the public tranquillity been convulsed by that baleful poison? What fatal disturbances have been raised, and what troubles have princes sustained to quell them? Some of the sects are inspired with a relentless hatred to government; their complaints are clamorous and unceasing, and they brood upon mischief, devising how to destroy superior power, and reduce all mankind to a level. What intestine murmurs have been heard; what tumultuous scenes have been seen, in England, Scotland, and France!

On another hand, the unhappy effects of this uneasy and ungenerous disposition, have been severely felt by those of the Catholic communion, living in protestant countries. Though all the reformed sects agreed in preaching up "christian liberty," the Catholics have seemed to be envied the least share of that invaluable blessing.—Without any just provocation, alarming outcries have been often thrown out against them: they have been threatened with the rigour of the laws, and persecution even has sometimes been set on foot. We see then that the loud *noise of the wings of the locusts*, like the loud rumbling noise *of chariots of many horses running to battle*, very fitly represents that restless turbulent spirit, which continued in the reformed societies, and banished peace from governments, as well as from the Church of Christ.

Here terminates the period of five months or 150 years, mentioned above in verse 5th; within which space of time is comprehended, as we have seen, one share of the history of the Reformation, and in reality the principal part of it. During this period, which commenced, as we have said, about the year 1525, and consequently ended 1675, the reformed religion was forcibly introduced, took its full growth, and was finally settled. In Germany, Holland, and Switzerland, borne upon the shoulders of sedition and rebellion, it became so far victorious as to procure its establishment by the celebrated treaty of Munster in Westphalia, in 1648.

The Calvinists or Huguenots in France made their way by detestable plots and dreadful civil wars, till they procured from Henry IV. the edict of Nantes, for the toleration of their religion in 1598; which edict was confirmed by Lewis XIII. in 1622, though afterwards repealed in 1685 by Lewis XIV. In other countries where the sovereigns received the Reformation, it was settled more early.

CHAPTER IX.

The continuation of the History of the fifth Age.

APOC. Chap. IX. v. 10. *And they*, the locusts, *had** *tails like to scorpions, and there were stings in their tails, and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had† over them,*

V. 11. *A king, the angel of the bottomless pit; whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek, Apollyon: in Latin, Exterminans*, that is, Destroyer.

We shall now proceed to the second period of time, which begins with the above 10th verse, and is of equal duration with the first, that is, consists of 150 years.

That here begins a new period of *five months*, or 150 years, different from that mentioned in verse the 5th, is not a groundless supposition, but is proved by the following reasons. First, the expression of *five months* being twice used, namely, in verse 5th and verse 10th, sufficiently argues a double period. For whoever studies the Apocalypse, will find in it such extreme precision, that the same thing is never repeated in the same circumstances; that every word expresses some particular object, and is so necessary in its place, that it cannot be taken away without maiming the sense One may therefore conclude, from the nature of this divine Revelation, that the repeated mention of *five months* indicates the distinction of a double period. Sir Isaac Newton acknowledged the same distinction, but applied it to a different subject. Secondly, the Greek text shows the same very plainly, and even the place where the first period expires and the second begins. In the verses 8th, 9th, the description proceeds by the repeat-

* In the Greek text, *have*. † In the Greek, *have*.

ed expression *they had, they had;* but at the 10th verse the expression is suddenly changed into *they have*, and continues so to the end of the description. This sudden change of time from *they had* to *they have*, clearly points out a transition from one period to another. And in this very same 10th verse, where the transition takes place, is immediately subjoined the second mention of *five months.*

The distinction of two periods, each of 150 years, being thus stated; as the first began with the Reformation about the year 1525, and expired at 1675, the second will reach to 1825. We are now to see what account our inspired writer gives of the Reformation in this latter period. It is mostly contained in the 10th verse, which we shall here put down conformable to the Greek text. *They*, the locusts, *have tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power, to hurt men five months.* Here the locusts are said to have tails, that resemble whole scorpions, with stings in them. This allegory describes very emphatically the angry temper of the Protestants, and their implacable enmity to those of the Catholic communion. Whoever presumes to abridge that "Evangelical Liberty," which is their idol, they immediately reclaim against the attempt, chaff, and threaten, like *scorpions*, to *sting*. They still retain a good share of that factious and violent temper with which they first propagated their religion, and which, during this period, breaks out on different occasions, to the disturbing of public peace and alarming the sovereigns, as experience sufficiently shows. On another hand, though the Reformation, as we have seen, was settled and secured, and in some kingdoms is the religion of the state; yet it retains a persecuting spirit against those of the ancient faith. The Protestants show they are armed with *scorpions' stings*, with which they angrily threaten, and they have still a *power to hurt* very sorely. They have, in this latter period, increased the number of inhuman laws made before against the Catholics: and these laws, perhaps indeed less severe than the former, have been at times more or less put in execution. In the preced-

ing period, they were allowed *to torment mankind*, ver. 5.; but in the present period, it is said, *their power is to hurt mankind*. The expression of *hurting*, as it is of a milder import than that of *tormenting*, indicates an abatement of their first rage, and a more moderate behaviour towards those they repute their enemies. This is a blessing, for which the Catholics offer just tribute of thanks to the Almighty, and acknowledge the humanity of those from whose hands the favour immediately comes. But, notwithstanding the moderate and generous disposition of some, there are always other malevolent individuals, who cannot wholly drop that animosity they imbibed in a misguided education, and will endeavour to force the magistrates to the execution of the laws against their fellow-creatures. Thus they threaten with their *stings*, or on occasions exercise against the Catholics their ill-will and *power* of *hurting*, as evidently appeared by the violence committed in the riots of the year 1780. But this disposition of Providence ought to be received by the sufferers in the view for which it is designed, namely, for quickening and maintaining their zeal; and it brings with it this comfort, that the suffering of persecution has always been the characteristic of the Church of Christ. *If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you*, John xv. 20.

We have now seen the prophetical history of the reformation. The description is full and circumstantial, and takes in the period of 300 years. In the first place was exhibited to us its rise; then the general character of it; and thirdly, the nature and degree of its power. These accounts are comprised in the six first verses of the ninth chapter. Then follows the description of the character, temper, and spirit of the chief reformers and their proselytes, with the successive alteration of their power, as settled by the Almighty hand. Which account is traced out in the verses 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th, in an admirable manner, by the progressive description of the locusts from head to tail. This allegorical delineation is drawn with such exquisite art, that it cannot, we believe, be equalled by any thing produced from pro-

sanc writers. But of this extraordinary picture there yet remains to be exhibited the last stroke of the prophetic pencil, which is: *And they*, the locusts, *have over them a king, the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek, Apollyon; in Latin, Exterminans*, that is, Destroyer. St. John, after giving us the history of the surprising revolution made in the Church by the reformation, closes it, by letting us into the secret of the means, by which it was contrived, was carried on, and is still preserved. He tells us, the locusts, or the people of the reformation, have over them a king, who is an angel of the bottomless pit, that is, an agel of hell, or a devil. Here then we see the original contriver and director of the whole work. Here we see who has been through the whole progress, their prompter, their chief, and their *king*. But who would envy them such a king? or who would choose to be a subject of such a sovereign? The name of this infernal spirit is even given; he is called *Abaddon*, or *Exterminator*, *Abolisher*, *Destroyer*. By this name his character is sufficiently clear. As pride is attributed to Lucifer, and to other fiends are ascribed special qualities; so here the evil spirit, who is the *king* of the reformation, is distinguished by the character of exterminating and destroying. One cannot but lament the misfortune of the Protestants, in voluntarily admitting over them such a *king*, and enlisting under his banner. A second misfortune is, they have been too faithful in their allegiance. We have already given a sufficient relation of their violent proceedings in the different countries, where the reformation got entrance. We specified some part of the conspiracies, tumults, rebellions, and civil wars it gave rise to, and the subversion of states which ensued. Could such scenes be conducted by any other but the *king Abaddon, the destroying angel?*

With respect to the Church, how many articles of faith, which are reckoned essential to religion, have they not *exploded*, as may be seen in the council of Trent? The holy sacraments also, those channels of divine grace, have they not *reduced* to two, or rather one, viz. Baptism; the Eucharist, in the opinion of

many of their sect, containing nothing more than mere bread and wine? Even Baptism itself is affirmed by some of them to be only a ceremony, not necessary for salvation. The rites and ceremonies, which form the exterior part of religion, and which greatly contribute to raise its dignity, and by impressing an awful respect on the minds of the faithful, increase their devotion, the reformation has almost entirely *abolished*. They have *exterminated* the spiritual jurisdiction of the see of Rome, acknowledged in all foregoing ages, and they have chosen *Abaddon* for their governor and *king*, instead of Christ's vicegerent. In the same manner they have *exploded* part of the canonical scriptures, Church traditions, councils, fathers, the ecclesiastical canons and discipline. They have *abrogated* the most noble and august sacrifice which Christ bequeathed to his Church, and thus have reduced the Christian community to a worse condition than either the Mosaic or patriarchal state, by leaving it without any sacrifice at all. They have also *abrogated* most of the exercises of mortification, so much recommended by our Saviour, and practised by the apostles and all antiquity; such as fasting, abstinence, continency, penance, self-denial, &c. They have *exterminated* confession, that great bridle to licentiousness and vice. They have *condemned* religious vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience; that path of Christian perfection, which has been trodden by thousands, and entitled so many of them to the beautitude of saints. They have *destroyed* monasteries, pulled down churches, trampled under foot the images of Jesus Christ, of his holy mother and his saints. They have *robbed* the faithful of that salutary and comfortable help they had always found in the invocation of the saints, by whose intercession, through the merits of Christ, such plentiful graces and blessings have derived to men. They even dared to profane with sacrilegious hands the sacred remains of the martyrs and confessors of God. In many places they forcibly took the saints' bodies from the repositories where they were kept, burned them, and scattered their ashes abroad. What can be a more atrocious indignity? Are parricides, or the most flagi-

tious villians ever worse treated? Thus among other instances, in the year 1562, the Calvinists broke open the shrine of St. Francis of Paula, at Plessis-les-tours, and finding his body uncorrupted fifty five years after his death, they dragged it about the streets, and burned it in a fire which they had made with the wood of a great crucifix; as BILLET and other historians relate.

Thus at Lyons in the same year, the Calvinists seized upon the shrine of St. Bonaventure, stripped it of its riches, burned his relicks in the market place, and threw his ashes into the river Saone, as is related by the learned POSSEVINUS, who was then in that city. The bodies also of St. Irenæus, St. Hilary, and St. Martin, as SURIUS asserts, were treated in the same ignominious manner. Such also was the treatment offered to the remains of St. Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, whose rich shrine, according to the words of Stowe in his annals, "was taken to the king's use, and the bones of St. "Thomas, by command of lord Cromwell, were burnt "to ashes, in September 1538, of Henry VIII. the "thirtieth." Thus the reformation waged war against the dead, and against the elect of God; as if sanctity had become infamous, and to have spilt their blood in the cause of Christ, was now to be judged criminal.

Thus the facts evince the universal devastation, carried through the Christian Church by the reformed religion. And thus it appears who was the founder of that new religion, its architect, its *king*, namely, *the angel of the bottomless pit, Abaddon, the exterminator.* One may however, further observe that, in order to manifest more clearly the accomplishment of this prophecy about the locusts, Almighty God seems to have ordained that the chiefs of the reformation should themselves give testimony of it. Luther, the primary head, avowed and proclaimed to the world, that he had had a conference with the devil about some articles of the religion he was then devising, that he had been convinced by the arguments of that spirit of falsehood, and directed in the determinations he should take. Thus he opens that famous colloquy. "Some time since," says Luther, "I awaked from my sleep, and behold the

"devil, who made it his business to occasion me many "sorrowful and restless nights, began a dispute with me "in my mind. Dost thou hear, said he, most excellent "doctor? Dost thou not know, that thou hast said pri- "vate masses almost every day, for fifteen years togeth- "er? and what, if in those masses thou hast practised "downright idolatry, &c?" Lib. de missa privata et sacerdotum unctione. Luther answers the devil in defending what he had done. The fiend pretends to prove his charge, by telling Luther, he must have been guilty of idolatry, because he had no true faith at that time, and consequently no ordination. By which it seems that the devil's attempt was to persuade the reformer, that there was neither true faith nor true ordination in the Catholic Church at that time, when he professed himself a member of it and said mass. As if the Church of God had been extinguished, notwithstanding the solemn promise of Christ, that *the gates of hell should never prevail against it*. The spirit of darkness urges likewise the unlawfulness of saying a mass, in which no one communicates but the priest: as if Christ had given any precept on this head. But without taking the trouble to confute minutely the devil's arguments, I presume every sensible man will allow that Luther, instead of giving any assent to them, should have rejected them with contempt, as so many certain impostures, and charged his antagonist with being the known enemy of truth. He should have rebuked him at once with the words of our Saviour: "Away with thee, satan," Matth. iv. 10. "Thou wast a murderer from the beginning, "and thou stood not in the truth; because truth is not "in thee: when thou speakest a lie, thou speakest from "thy own, for thou art a liar, and the father of lies." John viii. 44. But the reformer, instead of foiling his adversary with these arms, gives him up the victory, allows his own conviction, and triumphs in the imaginary discovery; concluding thus: by these means "we are "freed from private masses, and from the ordination of "bishops——Let them consider how they can defend "their Church." And from that time he desisted from saying mass.

Zuinglius in like manner, while he was in great perplexity and deep meditation how to explode the real presence in the Eucharist, was furnished with an argument for that purpose by a nocturnal "monitor, whether black or white he did not remember;" as he relates himself, Lib. de subsidio Euchar.

The whole explication here given of the allegory of the locusts, we presume, appears so consonant to the History of the Reformation, that the propriety of it will not be denied. Nor ought the author to be censured for presumption, since he is not the first who has thus applied that prophecy. LA CHETARDIE did so, about the end of the last century. Bellarmine did the same towards the end of the century before, and others had preceded him, as he testifies. In general, it appears from the writers of that period, that, no sooner did the numerous tribe of reformed religionists spring forth, than the Catholics, as if by a sudden inspiration, judged they saw the locusts of the Apocalypse. The application is even so obvious, that the learned protestant divine, Dr. Walton, used it for describing the multitude of new sectaries, that swarmed out of the English church. Thus speaks he in the preface to his Polyglot: "The bottomless pit seems to have been set open, from "whence a smoke has arisen which has darkened the "heavens and the stars, and locusts are come out with "stings, a numerous race of sectaries and heretics, who "have renewed all the ancient heresies, and invented "many monstrous opinions of their own—These have "filled our cities, villages, camps, houses, nay, our pul- "pits too, and lead the poor deluded people with them "to the pit of perdition."

The short sketches we have given from the general history of the Reformation for the illustration of the text, we hope will be deemed sufficient, especially considering the limits of this work. It would be endless to attempt a narrative of all the different parties, into which the Reformation has been split. They are not even to be enumerated. But one may in general observe, that its case is the same with that of all the heresies in preceding ages. Variation was always their

character. Thus it was with the Arians, with the Pelagians, with the Eutychians, &c. They never remained steady to their first plan of religion, nor could they keep their proselytes within the boundaries they first prescribed to them. St. Hilary, writing to the emperor Constantius, thus speaks of the Arians: "Your "case is the same with that of unskilful architects, who "are never pleased with their own work; you do no-"thing but build up and pull down.—There are now as "many models of faith as men, as great variety of doc-"trine as manners; we have yearly and monthly creeds; "we repent of our old creeds, we frame new ones, and "those again we condemn." Such was the confusion among the Arians. The number of different confessions of faith made by the Lutherans and the other reformed churches, demonstrates in like manner, the instability of their doctrine. They never could agree among themselves, nor could they ever settle their tenets; as is fully shown and related in the "History of the Variations," by the celebrated bishop of Meaux. Not content with what they pretended to have reformed, they would still go on reforming, without knowing where to stop. But indeed what wonder that people are bewildered, when they have no sure guide to direct them! The church which Christ had commanded every body to *hear**, they had left, and thus become solitary, they wandered in unknown paths, into which the spirit of seduction led them. Faith is one, but error easily multiplies, having the devil for its parent, who hates truth and concord. *Abaddon*, who contrived and conducted the Reformation, was also the author of its divisions and contradictions, and the *lying spirit in the mouth of all its prophets*. 3 Kings, xxii. 22. He still continues to actuate it in the same manner; and hence we see rise up every day new teachers, who, dissatisfied with what they find established, are ever proposing amendments and innovations. What idea can we form of a religion or an institution composed of such a number of dissonant parts, and, cameleon like, varying its

* Matt. xviii. 17, and Luke x. 16.

colours every day? What idea, I say, can we form of it, but of a monster, such as St. John describes it under the type of a frightful deformed locust, which has a man's face, a woman's hair, a lion's teeth, an iron breast, and a scorpion for its tail? In fine, the license of judging for himself being the claim of every member of the new religion, what could it produce, but what experience shows to have really happened, a defection from all religion? Some, uneasy under any restraint, declare themselves indifferent to every form of doctrine and worship, and are styled "Latitudinarians;" others, contenting themselves with the simple belief of a God, renounce all divine revelation, and are denominated "Deists," or "Free Thinkers;" and some are even said to be sunk into mere Materialism, that is, to believe no future state at all. "They who have made "bold with one article of faith," said St. Vincent of Lerins, in the fifth century, "will proceed on to others; "and what will be the consequence of this reforming of "religion, but only that these refiners will never have "done, till they have reformed it quite away?" Common. c. 29.

How different is the government and proceeding of the Catholic church! Founded on the *rock*, which is Christ, and governed by him according to his promise, she is always uniform und unanimous in her doctrine. Her faith is always the same. She received it from her divine Founder, and she preserves the sacred depositum inviolable. No jarring opinions, no innovations are allowed on that head. When a dogmatical point is to be determined, she speaks but once, and her decree is irrevocable. The first general council of Nice, declared her faith against the Arians; the council of Constantinople against the Macedonians; the council of Ephesus against the Nestorians; that of Chalcedon against the Eutychians; the second of Nice against the Iconoclasts; and so through the whole period of the Christian æra. These solemn determinations have remained unalterable, and will ever be so. Pursuing invariably the same course, she assembled in a general council at Trent, in 1545, where having examined the

When one reflects that, of the three hundred years allowed to the reign of the locusts, there remain only fifty or fifty-five to run *, one cannot but wish with an earnest heart, that the people represented by those insects would enter into a serious consideration of that circumstance. What a happiness! if, during this short remaining interval, some part of them at least would submit to see their errors, and the great mischief that has been done to the Church by their revolt against it. It is full time to lay down all animosity against their ancient Mother, think of a reconciliation, and ask to be received again into her bosom. She is an indulgent parent, and her arms are always open, even to her rebellious children, when they come in tears to implore her forgiveness. They should be sensible, that Christ is not only the protector of his beloved Spouse, the Church, but also the avenger of the injuries done to her. This power he has frequently exerted. The four preceding ages furnish us with the most evident proofs of it, under the respective four Vials of the wrath of God. She was revenged in the punishment of her persecutors, the Roman emperors, in the first age. The Arians, who impugned her faith and harassed her cruelly in the second age, felt also the avenging hand of the Son of God, whom, with his Church, they had blasphemed; after sore calamities, they were doomed to sink into annihilation. The third age exhibited to us a most conspicuous exertion of *the two-edged sword of Christ*, in the destruction of the cruel idolatrous Romans, for their having spilt the blood of his and his Spouse's children. The fourth age was distinguished by the punishment of the Greeks for their rebellion against the same Church, and the world still sees them groaning under slavery for their inflexible obstinacy. Such having been the conduct of the supreme Guardian of his Church through the course of all the Christian ages, is it not an object of consideration highly interesting to the Protestants, lest some such disaster should also be their fate? The Saviour

* This work was first printed in the year 1771.

of mankind waits with patience for the return of his strayed sheep, but their obstinacy at last forces his hand to strike. Unhappy children of the Reformation! refuse not to hear the wholesome advice of the prophet Isaiah: *Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found; call upon him, while he is near*, lv. 6. Hear the voice of God speaking to Israel, and make the application: *Return, O virgin of Israel, return to these thy cities*, Jerem. xxxi. 21. And again: *Be converted, O house of Israel, and do penance for all your iniquities; and iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, by which you have transgressed, and make to yourselves a new heart, and a new spirit: and why will you die, O house of Israel? For I desire not the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; return ye, and live*, Ezek. xviii. 30, 31, 32. But if deaf to all admonitions, they continue hardened in their own ways, what remains to be done but to lament their misfortune, and in bitterness of soul turn our eyes from the pouring out of the following vial.

The pouring out of the fifth Vial of the wrath of God.

Apoc. Chap. XVI. v. 10. *And the fifth Angel*, says St. John, *poured out his Vial upon the seat * of the beast: and his kingdom became dark, and they gnawed their tongues for pain.*

V. 11. *And they blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and wounds, and did not penance for their works.*

Here the Angel pours out the fifth Vial of the wrath of God on the *seat of the beast*, or rather, according to the Greek text, on the *throne of the beast*. We have observed, in the prelude to the vials, see page 38, that the general term *beast* has a double meaning, signifying idolatry or heresy, accordingly as either, like to a wild *beast*, makes its ravages in the Church. In the first and third ages it denoted idolatry, the subject of the history of those two ages. Here it is the image of heresy, the heresy of the Reformation, the characteristic

* In the Greek, *the throne.*

of the fifth age. Upon the *throne*, therefore, of this beast the Vial is poured out, that is, upon the kings and governors of the Protestant states, as they are the persons that sit, vested with power, upon the *thrones* of those heretical kingdoms. They, however, are themselves subordinate to their chief, *Abaddon*, who, as was specified in the text of the Trumpet, commands over all, and sits upon the *throne* as king paramount. The Protestant states become, of course, involved with their princes in the calamities poured out from the Vial, as we shall see presently.

But furthermore we may observe that, besides the single and general appellation of *beast* used here to express heresy, the prophet exhibits to us in the Trumpet of this age a particular beast, by which he represents and describes the heresy of the Reformation, namely, a locust-monster, which is partly locust, partly human, partly leonine, and parly scorpionic.

Besides the obvious propriety of the above explication of the Vial, a further argument may be adduced in confirmation of it. Though the different prophecies of the Apocalypse are involved in obscurity, yet one may observe the inspired writer generally throws in some glimpses of light to guide the solicitous inquirer. Thus may be remarked a fixed connexion between the Trumpets of the different ages and the respective Vials, of which we have already taken some notice. This consists in the use of the same expression in the Trumpet and Vial of the same age; which naturally leads us to the distinguishing of the object on which the Vial is poured. This object, if not precisely the same as mentioned in the Trumpet, it has at least a direct relation to it. In general, the Vial has for object the guilty part which is to be punished, and which is always pointed out in the Trumpet. Examples will elucidate the present observation. In the first Trumpet it is said, that hail and fire, mixed with blood, were cast upon *the earth*. In like manner the first Vial was poured out upon *the earth*. The same term, *the earth*, occurring in both, indicates that, as the Trumpet described the persecutions exercised by the Roman emperors

and magistrates on the Christian part of *the earth*, so these emperors and magistrates, who are the guilty part of *the earth*, and plainly alluded to in the Trumpet, are the object of punishment on which the Vial is poured. After the same manner, at the sounding of the second Trumpet, a great fiery mountain was cast into *the sea:* and the second Vial is also poured out upon *the sea*. From whence one may collect that, as Arianism, signified by the fiery mountain, infected a third part of the Christian *sea;* so upon the Arians, who are there exhibited as the guilty part of the *sea*, the Vial is poured. Again, the third Trumpet announced a great star, burning like a torch, falling upon the *rivers and fountains of waters*. In like manner the third Vial is poured upon the *rivers and fountains of waters*. The Trumpet here describes the desolation carried by the barbarians through the guilty heathen Roman empire; therefore on this same empire is the Vial poured. Lastly, at the sounding of the fourth Trumpet the *sun* was smitten; and the fourth Vial was also poured out upon the *sun*. The allegory used here in the Trumpet, denotes the schism of the Greeks: upon them, therefore, as the guilty, the Vial is poured; or rather, it is poured on the instrument of the scourge, to fit it for execution. This constant relation observed between the abovementioned Trumpets and Vials, holds equally between the fifth Trumpet and Vial. In the Trumpet we see the locusts are ruled by *a king, the angel of the bottomless pit*, whose name is *Abaddon*. The Vial is poured out upon the *throne of the beast*, and his *kingdom* becomes dark. On one side then we have the *king* of the locusts: on the other side we have the *throne* and the *kingdom*. Hence appears the connexion between the fifth Trumpet and fifth Vial. This Vial therefore is poured out upon the princes and states of the locust-kingdom.

In fine, we saw in the first Trumpet the Roman emperors persecuting the Christian religion; and the first Vial was poured upon them. In the second Trumpet we saw the Arians rebelling against the Church; and the second Vial was poured upon them. In the third

Trumpet we saw the Roman empire declining on account of its idolatry and enmity to Christianity; and the third Vial was poured upon it, to extinguish it. In the fourth Trumpet we saw the revolt of the Greeks against the Church; and the fourth Vial punished them. In the fifth Trumpet we see the Protestants revolting against the Church; upon whom then must the fifth Vial fall?

The Vial being poured upon the *throne of the beast*, it flows down from thence over his whole kingdom, the realm of the Reformation. For, *his kingdom became dark, and they gnawed their tongues for pain.* But with respect to the nature of this punishment, we shall be entirely silent, and leave it to be disclosed by the event. We shall only remark that, to judge from the expression of the text, the scourge seems to be severe, and we are extremely sorry it will be so ill received: *And they blasphemed the God of Heaven, because of their pains and wounds*, or sores, *and did not penance for their works.*

We shall here add another remark. The expression, *they gnawed their tongues for pain*, or rather, as it is in the Greek original, they *did* gnaw their tongues for pain, seems to refer to a time prior to that which follows, and is thus expressed, they *blasphemed*, &c. and may therefore relate to the first part of the punishment imported by this Vial, which may be the scourge inflicted on the French people, and perhaps others, and seems to indicate distress of famine, &c.

CHAPTER X.

The History of the Sixth age of the Christian Church.

HITHERTO, the account we find in history of the different ages, has contributed to explain the prophecies relating to them: but with respect to the age we are now entering upon, as it yet remains sealed up in the womb of futurity, we can have no light but what must be drawn from the prophecies themselves. And because prophecies are generally conceived in few words, and those veiled with obscurity, it cannot be expected we should give so clear and comprehensive a history of the sixth age as has been done in the preceding periods. We may, however, acknowledge here an unexpected assistance, which was not allowed us before, inasmuch as that part of the Apocalypse, which treats of the sixth age, seems to be expressed in somewhat clearer terms than any other, at least it appears so to us. The reason we may conceive to be, that the Almighty revealer of it is willing to give us beforehand, a tolerable intelligence of transactions that will touch us so nearly, and will be more terrible and trying to human nature, than any that have ever happened. By a previous, though imperfect, knowledge of dreadful calamities, we are warned to prepare for them. An impending evil, even the sentence of death itself, is less alarming when foreseen and expected. On that account, therefore, the divine bounty is pleased to be more copious and explicit in the revelations about the sixth age; and our prospect of it is further enlarged, by many particular scenes to be found in the ancient prophets which concur to throw an additional light over the whole picture. These are helps which, doubtless, serve in some measure, to promote and facilitate the present work; but it must be

confessed, the obscurity that still remains is such, and other difficulties so numerous, as necessarily to demand the indulgence of the critic.

The preceding five ages opened with the transactions contained under their respective seals. In like manner we shall now begin the epocha of the sixth and last age of the church in this world, with the events announced at the opening of the sixth seal.

The opening of the Sixth Seal.

Apoc. Chap. VI. v. 12. *And I saw*, says St. John, *when he*, the lamb, *had opened the sixth seal: and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair: and the whole moon became as blood.*

V. 13. *And the stars from heaven fell upon the earth, as the fig-tree casteth its green figs when it is shaken by a great wind:*

V. 14. *And the heaven departed as a book folded up: and every mountain and the islands were moved out of their places.*

V. 15. *And the kings of the earth, and the princes, and tribunes, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of mountains.*

V. 16. *And they say to the mountains and the rocks: fall upon us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.*

V. 17. *For the great day of their wrath* * *is come, and who shall be able to stand?*

Here are stupendous prodigies and dreadful disasters announced, many of which cannot be now clearly explained, but will be very conspicuous to those who shall exist at that time. They are the forerunners of the approaching general dissolution of the world, and are employed to announce the last terrible judgment, and to admonish mankind to prepare for it. If the idea which is conveyed to us by the simple description of these wonders strikes us with terror, how dreadful must they

* In the Greek, *his wrath.*

appear when they really happen! Great *earthquakes;* the *sun* darkened to such a degree as if covered with a black *hair-cloth*, and the *moon* reddening like *blood:* the *stars* seeming to *fall from the Heavens* as thick as *green figs* are *shaken* from the trees in a hurricane of *wind:* the *sky* appearing to *fold up* like a roll of parchment; and all the *mountains and islands moved out of their places*, perhaps by earthquakes and extremely vehement agitations of the sea. These tremendous phænomena, some real, others appearing to the human eye, show the violent convulsions nature will sustain, and the general confusion of the whole created system. At the sight of such events, what wonder if the wicked of every rank and denomination run to *hide themselves* for fear, as St. John tells us, and from the consciousness of their guilt suspect the *great day* is arrived, and that the Almighty is coming to judgment, which will make them wish that *the mountains and rocks would fall upon them* to shelter them *from the face* of their angry God, and *from the wrath of the Lamb.*

The description here given by our Christian prophet seems to specify only the principal and most terrible of the signs and calamities that will happen in the last period of the world: and in them one may understand, are comprehended those that are of a less destructive and terrifying nature. Some or other of these alarms, we may suppose, will open the sixth age, and will serve to fix the date of that epocha. They will continue to alarm mankind at different times during the course of that period, to remind them of the approaching end of the world. We may also observe that some of these striking events are likewise announced by the ancient prophets, and shall be taken notice of in proper places. The extraordinary signs and prodigies both in the heavens and on the earth here described, evidently speak the majesty and power of him, whose approaching coming they are designed to announce. They therefore necessarily tend to reflect that *glory* on the Lamb, which was said to be his due. Apoc. v. 12. see p. 18.

The nature of the subject seems to require we should subjoin to the preceding account that other, which our

Saviour himself gives of the same or similar prodigies. The assemblage of both will contribute to enlarge our knowledge of that interesting subject; and the comparison of them may serve as a proof, that the expressions used by St. John, are to be taken in their natural acceptation, and not in a metaphorical sense, as some might imagine; many of his expressions being similar to those of our Saviour, which have been generally understood in their natural sense.

The account which Christ delivered of the prodigies we are speaking of, is to be found in St. Matthew, chap. 24. St. Mark, chap. 13. and St. Luke, chap. 21. His disciples having asked him by what signs they should know the approaching ruin of Jerusalem, and also what signs would precede the general dissolution of the world, Christ answers both questions. But in the first part of his answer, he seems to assign the same prodigies for announcing both those events; as the destruction of Jerusalem may be a very expressive figure of the destruction of the world. And in this sense, the holy fathers have explained his discourse. In the latter part of his answer, Christ seems to confine himself solely to the pointing out of the signs, which will be the presages of the approaching end of all things.

He thus begins his discourse: *Take heed that no man seduce you. For many will come in my name, saying: I am he, I am Christ: and the time is at hand; and they will seduce many: go you not therefore after them.* The appearance of false Christs or false Messiahs, was then the first sign mentioned by our Saviour, and first warning of the approaching fate of Jerusalem. That many such impostors rose up in Judea before the demolition of Jerusalem by the Romans, we learn from Josephus in his history of the Jewish wars. It is here the opinion of the Holy Fathers, that Christ intended also to intimate by the preceding words, that false Christs will arise in a similar manner in the last age of the world, and be a sign of its approaching end.

Our Saviour proceeds: *You shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: See that you be not troubled. For these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For na-*

tion shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be pestilences, and famines, and great earthquakes in divers places, and terrors from Heaven, and there shall be great signs. These calamities happened before the ruin of Jerusalem, as the above-mentioned Jewish historian testifies. The same will likewise be experienced, it is supposed, in the last age. But Christ adds: *Now all these things are the beginnings of sorrows.* Though great evils, they are only to be deemed the prelude of greater. Then he goes on: *But before all these things they will lay their hands on you, and persecute you, and put you to death,* &c. Here are the persecutions foretold, which fell upon the apostles and first christians. The same will likewise rage in a more fierce manner hereafter under Antichrist.

And many false prophets shall rise, and shall seduce many: and because iniquity hath abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold. From this rise of false prophets or teachers of false doctrine, and the abounding of wickedness before the fall of the Jewish nation, it is concluded by the holy fathers, that similar unhappy circumstances will take place before the finishing of the world. And indeed, that *false prophets* or false teachers will then arise, we shall see it again expressed in the sequel of our Saviour's discourse; and that *iniquity* will likewise *abound*, is fully intimated by what Christ said on another occasion: *When the Son of man cometh, shall he find, think you, faith on the earth?* Luke xviii. 8.

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to all nations, and then shall the consummation come. A new people of Christians was to be formed by preaching the gospel, before the Jews, the ancient people of God, were rejected and their city and temple abolished. The gospel will likewise be preached with extraordinary zeal in the latter times over the whole earth, to stem the prevalence of imposture and depravity of morals, and to oppose in particular, the furious efforts of Antichrist against religion.

When therefore you shall see the abomination of desola-

tion, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, he that readeth, let him understand. When you shall see Jerusalem compassed about with an army: then know that the desolation thereof is at hand. Here our Saviour points out to his disciples, the most immediate sign by which they might know, that the ruin of Jerusalem was near at hand; namely, when they should see an idolatrous army arrive with its heathenish gods, which are *the abomination of desolation*, and invest Jerusalem, that city which was always styled the *holy place*, or holy city. We shall see hereafter that Antichrist will also set up what is called *the abomination of desolation.*

Then they that are in Judea, continues Christ, *let them flee to the mountains——For there shall be then great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, neither shall be. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things may be fulfilled that are written. There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And unless those days had been shortened, no flesh would be saved: but for sake of the elect, those days shall be shortened. And they*, the Jews, *shall fall by the edge of the sword; and shall be led away captives into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles till the times of the nations be fulfilled.* Thus then the calamities and signs having all happened that had been foretold by our Saviour, the fatal time fixed for the vengeance of the Almighty was come, and Jerusalem was taken and razed to the ground by the Roman army under the command of Titus Vespasian; the temple was burned, the Jews slaughtered to an immense number, a few were reserved by Titus to be carried in triumph to Rome, and the rest were sold for slaves, and dispersed into all nations. This happened in the year 70 of the Christian æra. Extreme were the calamities and miseries that people suffered in this war, by the plague, famine, and sword; they were even such as no nation had ever felt before. The Jews must have all certainly perished, had not God in his mercy *shortened those days of vengeance for the sake of the elect*, that is, for the sake of reserving a remnant of that peo-

ple, who are to remain in captivity *till the times of the nations be fulfilled;* that is, till the number of the Gentiles whom God will call to the Christian faith, be filled up; and then that remnant of the Jews will be converted, and acknowledge Christ for their Messiah.

In like manner, before the last coming of Christ to dissolve the fabrick of the world, the calamities of war that will fall upon mankind will be very great, though perhaps somewhat inferior to those the Jews experienced on the above occasion. But the persecution which will be exercised by Antichrist against the christians, will exceed in severity and cruelty, the persecutions of all past ages. But this dreadful period *will be shortened* by the mercy of God *for the sake of his elect*, and reduced to three years and a half.

Christ having thus carried on his predictions to the ruin of Jerusalem and the captivity of the Jews, which is to last to the latter time of the world, the sequel of his discourse naturally falls upon the transactions of that last period. *Then if any man*, says he, *shall say to you: lo, here is Christ, or there; do not believe him. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch as to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told it you beforehand. If, therefore, they shall say to you: behold he is in the desert, go ye not out: behold he is in the closets, believe it not.* Here is a full warning, which ought to be taken notice of, against the false Christs and false prophets, that will rise up in the last age; the chief of whom will be Antichrist, and the false prophet his attendant. And what is very alarming; they will have power *of showing great signs and wonders, insomuch, as to deceive, if possible, even the elect.* We shall see the same confirmed by the Apocalypse, in the two above-mentioned impostors.

A more full account of all these seducers, and of their infamous character, is given us in the epistles of St. Peter. and St. Paul. *In the last days*, says St. Peter, *there shall come deceitful scoffers, walking after their own lusts, saying, where is his promise of his coming? for since the time that the fathers slept, all things continue as*

they were from the beginning of the creation. 2 Ep. iii. 3, 4. *Know also this,* says St. Paul, *that in the last days shall come on dangerous times. Men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, haughty, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, wicked, without affection, without peace, slanderers, incontinent, unmerciful, without kindness, traitors, stubborn, puffed up, and lovers of pleasures more than of God: having an appearance indeed of godliness, but denying the power thereof.* 2 Tim. iii. 1, &c. The same admonition is given us by St. Jude in his epistle, v. 17, &c. *But you, my dearly beloved,* says this apostle, *be mindful of the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; who told you, that in the last time there should come mockers, walking according to their own desires in ungodliness. These are they, who separate themselves, sensual men, having not the spirit.*

To proceed with our Saviour's discourse: *And immediatety after the tribulation of those days,* says he, *the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from Heaven, and the powers of Heaven shall be moved. And there shall be upon the earth distress of nations, by reason of the confusion of the roaring of the sea and of the waves, men withering away for fear, and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world.* These previous signals of the end of the world are analogous to those described in the Apocalypse under the sixth seal, as will appear by the comparison of the two texts. See the text of the Apocalypse, given above, page 210. Our Saviour says: *The sun shall be darkened.* St. John, after the opening of the sixth seal, says: *The sun became black as sackcloth of hair.* Christ says: *The moon shall not give her light.* St. John says: *The moon became as blood.* Christ continues: *The stars shall fall from Heaven.* St. John in the above-mentioned place: *The stars from heaven fell upon the earth, as the fig-tree casteth its green figs when it is shaken by a great wind.* Christ again: *And the powers of Heaven shall be moved.* St. John: *And the Heaven departed as a book folded up.* Christ again: *And there shall be upon the earth distress of nations, by reason of the confusion of*

the roaring of the sea and of the waves. St. John in the above place: *And every mountain, and the islands, were moved out of their places.* Our Saviour proceeds: *Men withering away for fear, and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world.* St. John: *And the kings of the earth, and the princes, and tribunes, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of mountains. And they say to the mountains and the rocks: fall upon us, and hide us from the face of him who sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.* Hence it appears, that the words of our Saviour may be applied as the best interpretation of the text of St. John contained under the sixth seal.

Thus then it appears, that the discourse of Christ to his disciples, and the text of the Apocalypse, under the sixth seal, exhibit to us an epitome of the prodigies and disastrous events that will distinguish the sixth or last period of time. They will be sent as so many warnings of the approaching *great day of wrath*, when Christ will come in his power and majesty to judge the living and the dead, and to put an end to the present world. *When you shall see these things come to pass*, continues Christ, speaking to his disciples, *know that the kingdom of God is at hand*, Luke xxi. 31.

Narrative preparatory to the prophecy of the Sixth Trumpet.

The sixth or last period of time exhibits many great and extraordinary events, which are not all related by St. John, as some part of them had already been revealed in former prophecies. On that account we find it necessary to premise a narrative of those facts, which are previous to what is laid down in the Apocalypse. If the order in which we have ranged the particulars of this prophetic history, should not be approved by the reader, we desire him to reflect, we travel through the dark paths of futurity.

One event, that will chiefly distinguish the sixth age, and will be a prelude to the final period of the human

race in this world, is the appearance of that extraordinary man, Antichrist. But the way is to be opened for his coming, by two previous incidents, which we learn from St. Paul, and which will enable him to bring on those mischiefs upon mankind and that desolation upon the earth, which the prophets have foretold. St. Paul thus writes to the Thessalonians in his second epistle, chap. 2.

V. 1. *And we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of our gathering together unto him:*

V. 2. *That you be not easily moved from your mind, nor be frighted, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle as sent from us, as if the day of the Lord were at hand.*

V. 3. *Let no man deceive you by any means: for unless there come a revolt first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition,*

V. 4. *Who opposeth, and is lifted up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself as if he were God.*

V. 5. *Remember you not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things?*

V. 6. *And now you know what withholdeth, that he may be revealed in his time.*

V. 7. *For the mystery of iniquity already worketh; only that he who now holdeth, do hold, until he be taken out of the way.*

V. 8. *And then that wicked one shall be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall kill with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.*

Here the Apostle admonishes the Thessalonians, not to give way to terrors, as if the last day was near at hand; assuring them that the last day would not come, *till there came a revolt first, and the man of sin were revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth, and is lifted up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself as if he were God*, v. 3, 4. *By the man of sin, the son of perdition*, &c. all Christian antiquity, and the subsequent ages have ever understood that superlatively wicked

man, Antichrist. The end of the world therefore, will not happen, till after this man's appearance; and also after what St. Paul calls a *revolt*, which, it seems, will be previous to Antichrist's coming. This *revolt*, or rather according to the Greek text, *the apostacy*, denotes a defection from faith, as the generality of the Scripture interpreters have understood it. Alas! we have already seen a great flood of *apostacy* spread itself through the western part of Christendom, within the two last centuries and a half, by the rise of Lutheranism, Calvinism, &c. And this had been preceded in the eastern part of the church, by the Greek schism, Mahometanism, Arianism, &c. Even St. Paul assures us, he himself saw this apostacy, or defection from faith, ushering itself into the world: *for the mystery of iniquity already worketh*, says he, v. 7. The seeds of it were sown, and had sprung up in the Apostle's time, in the heretics called Simonians, Nicolaites, Gnostics, &c. But it will continue to gain ground and to ripen, till it comes to full maturity in the time of Antichrist, who by his extraordinary power, cruel persecutions, and insidious machinations, will together with his false prophet, seduce a prodigious number of Christians. This we shall see in the following part of the Apocalypse: and it is sufficiently intimated by our Saviour, as we observed under the sixth seal, in these words: *There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and great wonders, insomuch as to deceive, if possible, even the elect*, Matth. xxiv. 24.

Under the term *apostacy* may be comprehended, not only a defection from faith, but also a general degeneracy of morals, which already shows itself in the surprising growth of licentiousness and irreligion, in a tide of luxury, extravagance, and profligacy. This inundation of vice paves the way for worse, and will spread more and more with the progress of time, till it rises to a general flood of wickedness in the infamous dissolute reign of Antichrist. This seems to be also pointed at in the following words of Christ: *And because iniquity has abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold*, Matth. xxiv. 12. In fine, this general apostacy, with respect

both to faith and morality, was likewise fully insinuated by our Saviour, when he said: *When the Son of man cometh, shall he find, think you, faith on the earth?* Luke xviii. 8.

The second circumstance which will announce the coming of Antichrist, is obscurely expressed thus by St. Paul, in the above cited text: *And now you know what withholdeth, that he*, the man of sin or Antichrist, *be revealed in his time—Only that he who now holdeth, do hold, until he be taken out of the way, and then that wicked one*, Antichrist, *shall be revealed*, v. 6, 7, 8. The generality of the holy fathers have explained this text of the destruction of the Roman empire, which was to take place before Antichrist *should be revealed*. The same interpretation has also been transmitted through all the Christian ages by an uniform tradition; the ground of which can be no other but the explication St. Paul himself had given to the Thessalonians by word of mouth, as he tells them in this place: *Remember you not*, says he, *that when I was yet with you, I told you these things?* v. 5. According to the sense here exposed, the Roman empire, which *held* when St. John wrote, was therefore the thing *that withheld, and was to be taken away*, before Antichrist should appear. "Who "holds," says Tertullian, "but the Roman empire? "the division of which into ten kingdoms will bring on "Antichrist: and then, according to the Apostle, that "wicked one shall be revealed." *De Resurrect. Carnis* cap. 24. St. Jerome, relating the above words of the Apostle, *only that he who now holdeth, doth hold, until he be taken out of the way*, writes thus: "The Apostle, by "this expression, *He who now holdeth*, indicates the Ro- "man empire: he says it in obscure terms, because, if "he had spoken openly, he would imprudently have "raised the rage of persecutors against the Christians, "and against the Church, which was then beginning to "rise." In Jerem. c. 25. Again the same learned doctor of the Church, in another place, explaining the same passage, says: "Only that the Roman empire, "which holds now all nations under its power, be taken "away, and then Antichrist will come." *Epist.* 151

ad Algas. qu. 11. St. John Chrysostom, interpreting the same text, speaks thus: "It may be asked, what "St. Paul means when he says, *you know what with-* "*holdeth, that he may be revealed;* and then, why the "Apostle speaks so obscurely. He has in view the "Roman empire; and therefore it is with good reason "he speaks in obscure enigmatical terms, for fear of "irritating the Romans. The Apostle says then: *on-* "*ly that he who now holdeth, do hold, until he be taken* "*out of the way;* that is, when the Roman empire "shall be removed from the face of the earth, then "Antichrist will come." In 2 Thess. Hom. 4. Lactantius, speaking of the last period of the world, says: "At that time devastation will overspread the whole "earth, destroying every thing: the cause of which "desolation will be, that the Roman name, (I shudder "to say it, but I must, because it is to be,) will be taken "away from the earth, and the empire will return into "Asia; the East will domineer again, and the West "be subdued." Lib. 7. c. 15. St. Cyril, of Jerusalem, writes: "The devil will raise up a famous man, "who will seize upon the dominion of the Roman em- "pire. That man or Antichrist will appear, when the "Roman empire is come to its period." Catech. 15. St. Augustin, other fathers, and the Scripture-expositors of latter ages, have explained St. Paul's text in the same sense. From hence then it appears, that St. Paul has disclosed this particular circumstance, viz. that the Roman empire was to be dissolved before Antichrist appeared, and that its dissolution would be a sign of the approach of that impious man.

We have already seen in the history of the third age, that the great body of the Roman empire became divided into two: the Western, which had Rome for its capital; and the Eastern, of which Constantinople was constituted capital. We have likewise seen, that the Western empire was torn to pieces by different swarms of northern invaders, Goths, Vandals, Huns, Alans, &c. who parcelled out its provinces among themselves, and even burned Rome itself. Upon the destruction of the western part, it is plain it could not be said that the

whole Roman empire was extinguished, since the large eastern part still subsisted. Besides, it must be remembered, we related how the western Roman empire was revived and raised up anew, though not to its former grandeur, by Charlemagne, who was crowned emperor of it in the year 800. It has continued to exist ever since that epoch, and is swayed at present by the august house of Austria, and has its seat in Germany.

Nevertheless, upon the above-mentioned ruin of the western state, with Rome, its imperial head, which had been looked upon as the mighty centre and metropolis of the whole world, some of the Christians apprehended that, in conformity to the above prophecy of St. Paul, the time of Antichrist would soon succeed. This seemed to be the sentiment of St. Jerome, who lived at that period. "He that held," says he, "is taken out "of the way. and yet we do not understand that Anti-"christ must be coming." *Ep.* xi. *ad Ager.* This opinion, though false, for the reasons just now mentioned, yet was not totally devoid of foundation. For Rome, the principal head and ancient centre of all dominion, was then no more, and the most notable part of the empire, namely, the western, was suppressed. What wonder then, that the time of Antichrist was supposed, from the expression of St. Paul, to be approaching? And in effect we soon after see the birth of a man, viz. Mahomet, who, though not himself Antichrist, yet laid the foundations of a great power, which, we conceive, will form hereafter the Antichristian empire. The reason for this opinion will appear in the sequel. The ruin of ancient Rome was ultimately completed by Totila, king of the Goths, in the year 546; and not long after, Mahomet was born, viz. in 571, and began his conquests about the year 622. From that date the Mahometan power advanced with great rapidity and success, and grew to a prodigious height of dominion under the Saracens; as we have shown in the account of the fourth seal. Afterwards, the chief part of that vast empire fell by conquest into the hands of the Turks, where it remains at this day. These warriors, actuated by an insatiate thirst of power, en-

larged their conquests upon the eastern Roman empire, which at last they entirely subdued, and took the imperial city of Constantinople in 1453, where the conquering sultan, Mahomet II. fixed the seat of his own monarchy. Thus *was taken out of the way*, or extinguished, one part of that empire, the existence of which *withholds* or hinders the coming of Antichrist. And in this manner did the Turkish power increase, and, as we apprehend, will continue its progress, to pave the way to universal dominion under a ruler or emperor, who will in the end become Antichrist.

The fourth Seal, as we have seen, gave us the origin of the Mahometan monarchy, of which it was there said: *Power was given to him*, its rulers, *over the four parts of the earth*, Apoc. VI. 8. In the Greek, indeed, we read, *over the fourth part of the earth*. If the text of the Vulgate be followed, it is clear that the Mahometan dominion will extend over the four parts of the earth: and this will be further confirmed hereafter. The accomplishment of this prophecy is advancing, but not yet adequately fulfilled. The Turks have already in their possession a considerable part of Asia, a great extent of country in Africa, and a spacious territory in Europe. On the pouring out of the fourth Vial, we saw the divine justice fall upon the schismatic Greeks by the hands of the Turks, who thereupon greatly enlarged their empire. Now, as the people of Russia have been long involved in the same schism, and continue obstinate in it, must we suppose they will be exempted from all share in the fourth Vial, while their brethren, the Greeks of the Constantinopolitan state, have been sentenced to drink so deeply of it? God forbid we should presume to judge, or to forestal the divine determinations! we only say, it may possibly happen by virtue of the fourth Vial, that the Russians may be subdued by the Turks, and reduced into a slavery similar to that under which the Greeks have groaned so long. If this should come to pass, a road will be opened to the infidels into all the northern countries that lie near the Baltic Sea and the ocean. But whatever supposition be made with respect to the

same time it lies without its limits. And this latter circumstance is necessary, as the *little horn* ought to be independent on the other *ten horns*, which could not be if it was placed within the sphere of their power. In the country then of Crim Tartary, we conceive the Antichristian prince will be born, heir to that petty kingdom, and will succeed to it as kan or king of Crim and little Tartary. On another hand, we learn from prince Cantemir, in his history of the Ottoman empire, that the Mahometan family upon the throne of Crim Tartary is descended by a younger branch from the same stock as the Ottoman family that sits upon the throne of Constantinople, and the Turks have often declared that if the Ottoman family fail, that of Crim Tartary is to succeed their empire. We suppose, therefore, that the present Ottoman race, which now sways the Turkish sceptre, will some how or other be removed or extinguished; upon which the Antichristian prince, king of Crim Tartary, will claim his right, and mount the imperial throne of Turkey. This simple course of events, shows therefore the completion of Daniel's prophecy: a king of so small a country as Crim and little Tartary, may well be reputed *the little horn that sprung out of the midst of the ten horns*; and this petty king's succeeding to the Turkish empire, explains how the little horn grew *mightier than the other horns*.

Before we explain the rest of the above prophecy, it may not be amiss to add something more concerning the origin of this famous future prince. It is the opinion of many of the ancients, that Antichrist will be a Jew, born of the tribe of Dan. They allege as a probable proof of it; first, the prophecy of Jacob about his son Dan. Thus spoke that Patriarch: *Dan shall judge his people like another tribe in Israel. Let Dan be a snake in the way, a serpent in the path, that biteth the horse's heels, that his rider may fall backward*, Gen. xlix. 16, 17. Upon which St. Augustin says: "When Jacob gave "his last blessing to his sons, he spoke in such manner "of Dan, as to give reason to think that Antichrist will "be born of that tribe." *Qu. 22. in Josue.* But this prediction seems to have been accomplished in that ex-

ordinary man, Samson, who was born of the tribe of an, became judge in Israel, and was truly *a snake in e way* to the Philistines: for he met them every here and sorely tormented them. And in this sense . Jerome explains it. *In Quæst. Hebr.*

The second argument adduced in favour of the same inion, is drawn from the seventh chapter of the Apocypse, where in the enumeration of the Jews, who in ch tribe were to be signed with the sign of the living od, the tribe of Dan is omitted, as if it was excluded om that favour on account of its giving birth to that ost wicked of all men, Antichrist. But this argument es not seem to be sufficiently grounded. For, in the st place, St. John, before he begins that enumeration ys, that there were *a hundred and forty-four thousand*, , twelve times twelve thousand, *signed, out of all the ibes of Israel*, vii. 4. He therefore meant to enumete *all* the twelve tribes. Secondly, in that enumeraon we may observe there is mention made of the tribe Joseph, and of the tribe of Mannasse, but no mention that of Ephraim; we must also observe that the tribe Joseph comprehended both the tribes of Ephraim d Manasse, who were Joseph's two sons. Therefore ther the tribe of Joseph would have been solely menoned, without that of Manasse; or else the two epaite tribes of Ephraim and Manasse would have been entioned, without that of Joseph. It appears then, at as the text stands, the mention of the tribe of Maasse is superfluous, being included in that of Joseph. deed, a mistake seems to have crept into the text rough inadvertency of the copier, who, instead of AN, in the Greek original, wrote MAN in his copy, s the Greek letters Δ and M are not so very different: d in subsequent copies, MAN might be lengthened t into MANASSE, for which it was supposed to and. Therefore it would seem, that Dan stood in e original text, instead of Man or Manasse. Beides, upon the supposition even that Antichrist was spring from the tribe of Dan, we do not see why the hole tribe should be accursed for that. We may then nclude with respect to this article, that as there ap-

pears nothing in holy writ to determine the original of Antichrist, we may suppose he will be born of Mahometan parents, such being at present the prince and people of Crim Tartary.

But to resume the prophecy of Daniel. *I considered the horns*, says he, *and behold, another little horn sprung out of the midst of them: and three of the first horns were plucked up at the presence thereof*, vii. 8. The last part, which alone remains to be considered, *and three of the first horns were plucked up at the presence thereof*, is thus explained to him by the angel: *and he shall bring down three kings*, v. 24; that is, the Antichristian king, represented by the *little horn*, will subdue three kings or three kingdoms, which must be provinces of the ancient Roman empire; because, as we observed, that empire is represented by the *beast*, and its provinces are signified by the beast's *horns*. And thus, by his reducing three kingdoms under his power, *three horns* of the beast *will be plucked up* by him. This Antichristian prince, at his accession to the imperial crown of Constantinople, will find the Turkish empire in actual possession of seven of the ten provinces that made up the whole ancient Roman state. These acquisitions, and that of most of the northern countries of Europe, will have been the work of his predecessors, as we have already remarked, and he will enter upon a dominion of vast extent. But there will still remain three provinces or kingdoms, unsubdued, within the compass of the old Roman empire. These are reserved for his own conquest.

It may now be asked, which may be supposed to be the three kingdoms here spoken of. To answer the question; it appears pretty clear, that the present German empire must be one of the three, as it was formerly a Roman province, and is still the representative of the Roman empire; and consequently according to the above-cited prophecy of St. Paul, *it must be taken out of the way*. The other two kingdoms we apprehend may be France and Spain; because they constituted formerly two provinces of the Roman state, and seem to be almost the only considerable powers remaining, which will not have been before swallowed up in the Turkish

dominion. This however cannot be certainly ascertained; as perchance Italy may be one of these two kingdoms, unless on account of its being divided into a number of petty states, it may not be reputed to form a *kingdom*. Thus then by the reduction of the three kingdoms *he who held will be taken out of the way*, conformably to the prophecy of St. Paul; that is, the Roman empire will be wholly put down, and incorporated in the dominion of the Antichristian emperor. But it must be observed, all these things happen while he is a successful conquering prince, before he declares himself Antichrist; as follows from the apostle's words, already cited: *Only that he who now holdeth, do hold, until he be taken out of the way: and then that wicked one*, Antichrist, *shall be revealed.*

According to the above account, deduced from the predictions of Daniel and St. Paul, the Antichristian prince becomes master of all those spacious countries that constituted the ancient Roman empire; and of course he may be truly styled Roman emperor. And that such he will one day be, may be further confirmed from the Apocalypse. We have seen, page 103, in the explication of the 17th chapter of the Apocalypse, that the *seven heads* of the beast which represents the Roman empire, denote seven Roman emperors, of whom Antichrist himself is the seventh or last. The same will likewise appear hereafter in the exposition of chapter the 13th, which evidently relates to Antichrist. Such also we find to have been the general sentiment of the ancients. Thus speaks St. John Chrysostom: "As those empires, "which preceded the Roman, were destroyed; that of "the Babylonians by that of the Persians, that of the "Persians by that of the Macedonians, that of the Ma"cedonians by that of the Romans; so will likewise the "empire of the Romans be destroyed by Antichrist." *In 2. Thess. hom. 4.* St. Cyril of Jerusalem says: "The "devil will raise up a famous man, Antichrist, who will "seize upon the dominions of the Roman empire." *Catech. 15.* St. Irenæus, St. Jerome, and others might be quoted for the same purpose.

Constantinople, which has been the seat of the Turk-

ish monarchs ever since it fell under their dominion, will continue to remain so under this Turkish Antichristian, and Roman Emperor. That city, though very large at present, upon the vast accession of empire, will probably increase to a great degree, in magnitude, grandeur, and riches. As the ancient Romans could never sit down to enjoy their acquisitions in the sweets of peace, but were constantly stimulated by insatiate lust of power to add to their dominion; in like manner this new Roman emperor, as if with the acquisition of their territory he inherited their restless ambition, will pursue his destructive view of aggrandizing his power and empire. The reduction of one country after another, will whet his appetite for conquest, and each conquest will facilitate the way to further success. Having added Europe to his other dominions, he will have at command the naval power of all the great maritime states. His numerous fleets may therefore fly from one continent to another, from one island to another, and strike terror wherever they come. What wonder then if he enlarges his empire with fresh conquests in Africa, America, in the East and West Indies?

In these times iniquity will abound. Universal will have been the propagation of infidelity, irreligion, and immorality, as we have before observed from the words of our Saviour and St. Paul. Defection from faith, disregard for its teachers, licentiousness in opinions, depravity in morals, will so far at last deaden the influence of religion, and cause such degeneracy in mankind, that many will be so base as even to espouse idolatry. This assertion may seem incredible to some at this day, and may be esteemed an Absurdity; but we shall see idolatry expressly mentioned in the Apocalypse, as existing in the time of Antichrist. And indeed, I apprehend our surprise will much abate, if we take into consideration the temper and disposition of the present times. When men divest themselves, as they seem to do at present, of all fear of the Supreme Being, of all respect for their Creator and Lord; when they immerse themselves in the gratification of sensuality; when they give *full* loose to the human passions, and direct their whole

study to the pursuits of a corrupt world, with a total forgetfulness of a future state; may we not say that the transition is easy to idolatry? When all the steps are taken that lead to a mark, what wonder if we arrive at it? Such was the gradual degeneracy of mankind in the early ages of the world, that brought on the abominable practices of idol-worship. I am aware it will be said, we have the happiness to live in the most enlightened of all ages, our knowledge is more perfect, our ideas are more improved and refined, the human faculties are now better cultivated than ever before, and in fine, the present race of mankind may be reckoned a society of philosophers, when compared to preceding generations: how then can such a stupidity seize the human mind, as to sink it into idolatry? But I apprehend, this kind of reasoning is more specious than solid. For, allowing the present times to surpass the former in refinement and knowledge, it must be said they are proportionably more vicious. Refinement of reason has contributed, as every one knows, to refine upon the means of gratifying the human passions. Besides, how much soever enlightened the mind may be supposed to be, if the heart is corrupted, what excesses the man will run into, daily experience teaches. If the philosopher is not governed by the power of religion, his conduct will be absurd, and even despicable to the most ignorant individual of the lowest rank. A Socrates, a Cicero, a Seneca, are said to have been acquainted with the knowledge of one Supreme God; but they had not courage to profess his worship, and in their public conduct, basely sacrificed to stocks and stones with the vulgar. When men have banished from their heart the sense of religion, and despise the ties of justice, (and is not this the case of numbers?) will many of them scruple to incense a statue, if doing so will serve their ambition, their interest, or whatever may be their favourite passion? Where is then the surprise, that infidelity and irreligion be succeeded by idolatry? That pride alone, when inflamed with a constant flow of prosperity, may raise a man to the extravagant presumption of claiming to himself divine honours, we have example of Alexander,

the celebrated Macedonian conqueror, in several emperors of Babylon and ancient Rome. From suggestions of that same principle of pride may it not happen, that the Turks in future time, elated by a long series of success, by a continued course of victories and conquest, may it not happen, I say, that they will ascribe all this good fortune to the imaginary protection of their great Mahomet, and thence set him up for a God? *By the vanity of men*, says the book of wisdom, *idols came into the world*, xiv. 14. If it should so happen, in the vast bulk of people then under the yoke of that empire, how many individuals may yield to the same absurd impiety, some out of fear for what they may lose, others out of a view to gain what they covet!

The unparalleled success which will attend the arms of this domineering prince, the Antichristian hero, the greatness of his power and the extent of his dominion, superior to every thing that has been seen before, will strike with amazement the whole world, and in particular the Jews, who have been ever expecting such a glorious conqueror. They will be dazzled by the appearances of such extraordinary prosperity, and will view this great monarch with minds suspended in doubt, whether he be not the Messiah they have so long waited for. Such has been the misfortune of the Jews to be always inflexibly fixed in the opinion that the Messiah is to be a prince of the highest temporal grandeur and power, and who will not only restore them to their ancient land and possessions, but also raise them to such a pitch of eminence as to domineer over the whole world. The Antichristian emperor, knowing this their carnal disposition, and by his unbounded ambition coveting to be acknowledged master and revered by all classes of men, will craftily encourage the Jews in their delusive notions, and draw them into the snare. He will pretend to be the great personage promised to them by the prophets. He will pretend to be lineally descended from king David, who was foretold to be the parent of the Messiah. He will feign to be attached to the law of Moses, to be zealous in the observance of its rites, and will allege for proof of

his sincerity, his having been circumcised; which circumstance will be true, as circumcision has always been in use among the Mahometans.

Thus he will put on the mask of dissimulation: "Antichrist will be," says St. Gregory the Great, "the "chief of all hypocrites. That seducer will pretend to "sanctity, that he may draw others into iniquity." In Job. lib. 25. c. 14. St. Ambrose in Luc. 12. is of opinion, that he will allege the sacred Scriptures to prove to the Jews that he is their Messiah, and the Christ. "Before the end of the world," says St. Cyril of Jerusalem, "Satan will raise up a man who will falsely as-"sume the name of Christ, and by that means will se-"duce the Jews." Catech. 15. Masked under the title of their glorious Messiah, he will flatter them with promises of restoring them to their ancient inheritance, the possession of the whole country of Judæa, and in particular to their beloved city of Jerusalem. He will promise to rebuild their temple, and reinstate the Mosaic religion in its primitive splendour. He will pretend to make them the most glorious people upon earth, and that the great expectations they have so long waited for shall now be fulfilled. To give greater weight to all his fictitious pretences, the arch-impostor will place himself at Jerusalem, where the Jews expect their Messiah will hold his residence. Thither he will invite them to resort, that they may receive the effect of his promises. Thus allured, they will repair thither in great number, and will acknowledge him for their king and Messiah. That such will be the illusion of the Jews, is the general opinion of the ancient fathers of the Church, and of the subsequent interpreters of Holy Writ. They ground their sentiment on those words of our Saviour to the Jews: *I am come in the name of my Father, and you receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him you will receive*, John v. 43. By this *other who will come in his own name and be received* by the Jews, the above writers understand Antichrist.

But while the Antichristian impostor is carrying on this farce at Jerusalem, and the Jews moving from all parts of the globe to resort thither, it seems that some

sudden accident will happen that will alarm him, and oblige him to set out for the East to assemble an army. For, at the sounding of the sixth trumpet, we shall see an immense body of troops cross the Euphrates from the East. This may come to pass, if we suppose that the European nations combine all together at this time to revolt, and to rescue themselves from his tyrannical government. In which view they may join their forces, and make up a most formidable army. Upon this news reaching him at Jerusalem, he will drop all his projects concerning the Jews, and without executing any of the promises made to them, he will set out in great wrath for the East, to raise a large body of forces, to chastise in the severest manner his rebellious subjects of Europe. In his absence the Jews will continue to flock in great crowds to Jerusalem. But instead of meeting with the Messiah they expected, they will soon find that their assembling together was designed to serve other purposes of divine Providence.

For now the term was expiring which the Almighty had fixed for the duration of the Jewish captivity; now the time was come, which in the decrees of his mercy, he had settled for recalling to himself that people who had been so long estranged from him. By a particular mark of bounty they had been chosen in former ages by him as his peculiar people, and adopted preferably to any other nation. They shared his favours in great abundance and in the most conspicuous manner; and though in their infidelities and gross deviations from their duty he used the rod of correction, yet he always retained the disposition of a merciful father for them. *Many a time did he turn away his anger, and did not kindle all his wrath. And he remembered that they are flesh*, Psalm lxxvii. 38, 39. He had forewarned them and told them: *If you despise my laws, and contemn my judgments, so as not to do those things which are appointed by me, and to make void my covenant; I also will quickly do these things to you: I will quickly visit you with poverty, &c.—I will set my face against you, and you shall fall down before your enemies. And I will scatter you among the Gentiles.* But then the Almighty pre-

sently after adds: *And yet for all that, when they were in the land of their enemies, I did not cast them off altogether, neither did I so despise them, that they should be quite consumed, and I should make void my covenant with them. For I am the Lord their God*, Levit. xxvi. 15, &c.

He spoke again by his prophet Amos: *Behold the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the face of the earth: but yet I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord*, Amos ix 8 Unfaithful to their God, they frequently offended, he frequently punished them; and as often as they returned and implored his forgiveness, as often he forgave and again cherished them. When their ingratitude had grown to such a height, as totally to abandon their indulgent Father and their God, and by a base prostitution to transfer to stocks and stones the worship due to him, and even obstinately to persist in their idolatry, notwithstanding the constant reproaches he made them; he in his just anger banished them from their native land, and delivered them over to their enemies. The ten tribes, which formed the kingdom of Israel, were carried away slaves into Assyria; whence they afterwards dispersed themselves into other countries.

The tribes of Juda and Benjamin, of which consisted the kingdom of Juda, were removed to Babylon by Nabuchodonosor, where they were subjected to a severe captivity for seventy years. These bounds of time God set to his justice, and then the affection of the Father returned. They repented of their iniquities; he replaced them in their country, and renewed his blessings to them. Some of the Israelites returned also from Assyria, and uniting themselves to the Jews, formed one body with them.

After a period of years the term arrived, in which their fidelity was to be put to the strictest test. The principal of all the divine dispensations to man, the redemption of the world, was now to be performed. The great personage, the Son of God, who was to execute the work, had been announced to the Jews by their prophets, and was to be born of their race. A com-

mand from Heaven had been given them through the channel of the same prophets, to receive him as their promised Messiah, to acknowledge him for their new Legislator, and to accept his doctrine and laws in lieu of those they had hitherto followed: and that they might not mistake his person, their prophets had given them a full description of his character, of the time of his coming, of the tenour of his life, and his extraordinary miraculous works. But when he appeared, his character and garb not answering to the carnal notions they had formed to themselves of his supposed power and grandeur, they refused to receive him. They expected in their Messiah, a mighty conqueror, a potent monarch, who would raise them above all other nations. They would not understand that the blessings designed by the Divine wisdom to adorn and signalize the Messiah, were of a far nobler, sublimer, and more lasting nature, than all that worldly pomp and imaginary dominion their hearts were set upon. As therefore these temporal views and expectations they did not find in the humble and low condition in which Christ appeared, they rejected their God and Saviour, they despised his doctrine, they contemned and blasphemed his miracles, they treated his sacred person with the utmost indignity, and even proceeded to such an unparalleled instance of impiety, as to put him to death. This enormous crime, the greatest they had been or could be guilty of, drew the whole torrent of Divine wrath upon them. They had said: *His blood be upon us, and upon our children*, Matth. xxvii. 25. And effectually their horrible imprecation fell upon their own heads, and upon their children also. Within less than the space of forty years after, the Almighty sent upon them his scourge, the Romans, who ravaged their country, destroyed their city and temple; and after that an innumerable multitude of them had perished by famine, plague, and the sword, the remainder were expelled Judæa, and scattered over the whole face of the earth, conformably to the prediction of our Saviour: *There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people*, the Jews. *And they shall fall by the edge of*

the sword; and shall be led away captives into all nations, Luke xxi. 23, 24. In this desolate condition, without any fixed abode or government, the contempt of mankind, they have remained for 1700 years; and thus they still continue a dreadful and lasting monument of the Divine indignation.

But it must be observed that, notwithstanding this most terrible, most severe, and most lasting of all the punishments the Almighty has inflicted upon the Jews, nevertheless he has not utterly exterminated them. Their race subsists, and is very numerous. The calamities and oppression they have undergone, would probably have extinguished any other people, but they are still preserved by a special protection for a future great purpose. The manifold benefits the Saviour of mankind came to confer on the world, were first offered to the Jews, but being rejected, they were transferred to the Gentiles, who took the place of that people in the favour of God. *Therefore I say to you*, the Messiah told them, *that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation yielding the fruits thereof.* Matth. xxi. 43. In consequence of this Divine determination, the light of faith and the happy tidings of salvation were carried to other nations, that lay buried in gross ignorance and in the darkness of idolatry; they were taught the true knowledge of God and of Christ their Saviour, which they embraced, and became the people of God by becoming Christians. But when the merciful dispensations of heaven to the Gentiles shall be completed, that is, when the gospel of Christ shall have been fully preached to mankind, and the number of converts to Christianity, designed by the Almighty, shall be filled up, and the end of the world approaching, then the last posterity of the Jewish people shall experience that bounty which the Almighty has hitherto suspended for many ages, but in his mercy has kept in reserve for them.

He will then take from them *their heart of stone*, and give them *a heart of flesh*; he will make them sensible of their past blindness and obstinacy, will open their eyes to acknowledge Christ their Messiah and Saviour,

xxxvi. 24, &c. We shall close these prophecies with a passage from Micheas: *It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared in the top of mountains, and high above the hills, and people shall flow to it.—In that day, saith the Lord, I will gather up her that halteth; and her that I had cast out I will gather up, and her whom I had afflicted. And I will make her that halted, a remnant; and her that had been afflicted, a mighty nation: and the Lord will reign over them in mount Sion, from this time now and for ever*, iv. 1. 6, 7.

It being then the gracious design of the Almighty to receive again the Jews into his favour, by their conversion to Christianity, at the period we are speaking of when they are gathering together at Jerusalem; it is now to be examined by what means that great work is to be effected, and who is to be the happy instrument of it. All antiquity and tradition tell us, that Elias is the person. And these vouchers are grounded on the express word of Scripture. Thus spoke God to the Jews by the mouth of his prophet Malachy: *Behold, I will send you Elias the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers: lest I come and strike the earth with anathema*, iv. 5, 6. Here the Almighty promises that, before *the great and dreadful day* of judgment, he will send the prophet Elias, who *shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers*, that is, he will convert the Jews by convincing them that their Messiah is that very Jesus whom they have rejected, and by such conviction he will reconcile them to their fathers, the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; who believed in Christ to come, expected him, and *desired to see his day*, (John viii. 56,) while the Jews by the preaching of Elias will believe in him already come: and thus will ensue a mutual reconciliation; the fathers and the children, who had been divided from the time of Christ's coming, will be re-united in the same faith and obedience to God. This work will be done, *lest I come*, says the Lord, *and strike the earth with*

anathema, or, with utter destruction; that is, lest the whole body of the Jewish people perish at the last day for want of faith in their Saviour; and also lest there should be found at that time so few among men deserving mercy, on account of their infidelity and irreligion, as to oblige the Almighty *to strike the earth with utter destruction*, or in other words, to condemn almost the whole bulk of mankind.

The conversion therefore of the Jews to Christianity is to be the principal function of Elias. For this design, he has been reserved by the wisdom and bounty of God, and not been suffered to die. While Eliseus was walking with him, he was taken away by the divine hand from the earth, and conveyed to some place unknown to mankind. *As they*, Elias and Eliseus, *went on, walking and talking together, behold, a fiery chariot and fiery horses parted them both asunder: and Elias went up by a whirlwind into heaven*, 4 Kings, ii. 11. Elias therefore still exists in life, and will remain so, till he returns again upon earth, in full vigour, vested with that extraordinary commission from the most high, to remove the veil of darkness that hangs before the eyes of the Jews, to show them their past error, and introduce them into the fold of Christ, their God and Redeemer.

That such will be the office committed to Elias, we also learn very clearly from the book of Ecclesiasticus, chap. 48. v. 4, 9, 10. where it is said: *Who can glory like to thee*, Elias?—*Who wast taken up in a wrirlwind of fire, in a chariot of fiery horses. Who art registered in the judgments of times, to appease the wrath of the Lord, to reconcile the heart of the father to the son, and to restore the tribes of Jacob.* Elias is here said by the inspired writer, *to be registered in the judgments of times*, that is, destined to be, at an appointed time, a kind of mediator, *to appease the wrath of the Lord*, irritated against the Jews for their infidelity; *to reconcile the heart of the father to the son*, by bringing them to the faith and holy sentiments of the patriarchs their ancestors, as we said above; and in fine, he is destined *to restore the tribes of Jacob* to the favour of God, by teaching them to acknowledge his divine son Jesus for their Messiah. He will

restore the tribes of Jacob, by re-ingrafting them on the true olive tree, from whence, according to the apostle, they had been cut off for their infidelity *Because of unbelief*, says St. Paul, *they were broken off.—And if they abide not in unbelief, they shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou*, Gentile, *wert cut off the wild olive tree, which is natural to thee; and, contrary to nature, wert grafted into the good olive tree; how much shall they*, the Jews, *that are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For, blindness in part has happened in Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles should come in; and so all Israel should be saved.* Rom. xi. 20, 23, &c. The same account of Elias is confirmed by our Saviour, who told his disciples: *Elias indeed shall come, and shall restore all things*, Matth. xvii. 11. But let us here observe, that the expression of the book of Ecclesiasticus, *Elias will restore the tribes of Jacob*, and that of our Saviour, *Elias will restore all things*, seem to indicate more than the conversion of the Jewish nation to the faith, as this conversion is sufficiently insinuated in the expression of Elias *appeasing the wrath of God and reconciling the heart of the father to the son.* It appears therefore probable, that Elias will, by divine instruction, discover to the Jews the original distinction of their tribes, which they seem to have confounded and lost: then that he will restore the tribes to their primitive possessions, by re-establishing them in their ancient land of Judæa, each tribe in his new respective partition, as marked out by Ezekiel, ch. 48. The execution of this work will not at all be impossible to the prophet, as he will be endued with so ample a degree of authority from God, and so extraordinary a power of working miracles. This observation will be confirmed in the sequel from the ancient prophets, who represent the Jews in full possession of the holy land after the time of Antichrist.

But if the Almighty, through his special mercy to the Jews, appoints them a teacher in Elias, to bring them back into the true path, from which they have so long strayed, it is not to be imagined he leaves the rest of the world without the same kind of assistance. A teacher

of extraordinary power and virtue will be the more wanted, as *iniquity will abound* in these times, and even the good will be exposed to dangerous and most severe trials. To answer this exigency the all-bountifull God will send another agent, namely, Henoch. We learn from Moses that this patriarch by a particular privilege, was preserved from death: *Henoch walked with God, and was seen no more; because God took him*, Gen. v. 24. We learn the same from St. Paul: *By faith Henoch was taken away, that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had taken him away*, Rom. xi. 5. In the whole class of mankind, Henoch and Elias are the only two persons to be found, that have not paid the common debt of nature; which is deferred, till they shall have completed the functions to which they are destined, and which are not to take place till the latter days. They will then have, each, their separate commission. That of Elias will be, as we have seen, the conversion of the Jews, &c. or, *to restore the tribes of Jacob;* while Henoch will be sent to preach to the Gentiles, as we learn from the book of Ecclesiasticus: *Henoch pleased God, and was translated into Paradise, that he may give repentance to the nations*, xliv. 16. The object therefore of Henoch's ministry is *to give repentance to the nations*, to withdraw idolaters from idolatry, to move bad Christians to repentance and bring them back into the ways of virtue, and in fine to stem the prevailing tide of iniquity. In the same manner then as St. Peter was appointed the apostle of the Jews, and St. Paul the apostle of the nations, Gal. ii. 7, 8, so Elias will be sent, chiefly to the former, and Henoch to the latter: but as the preaching of each of the two apostles was not entirely confined to either body of people, but sometimes extended to both; so likewise Elias and Henoch will sometimes mix their labours in favour of both Jews and nations. It is here further to be observed, that Henoch represents the ancient patriarchs and people, who lived under the law of nature; and Elias the Jewish prophets with that people, who were bound to the Mosaic institution: so that by their preaching the Christian religion, we understand that both the patriarchs and the prophets,

both the law of nature and the Mosaic will appear again, if the expression be allowed, upon the stage of the world, to concur in giving testimony to Christ.

The two messengers of God, Henoch and Elias, are the two witnesses, whose appearance and functions are described by St. John in the Apocalypse: *And I will give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred sixty days, clothed in sackcloth*, xi. 3. God will give unto these, *his two witnesses*, the spirit of preaching and prophecy; by virtue of which they will preach and *prophecy* for a time that is limited to *a thousand two hundred and sixty days*, that is, forty-two months of 30 days each, or three years and a half. During this period of their ministry, they will imitate the conduct observed by St. John Baptist on his preaching, by showing in themselves the examples of a penitential life, and practising the austerities of mortification, as appears by the expression, that they will be *clothed in sackcloth*. And such example, doubtless, will add great weight to their preaching.

St. John continues to describe the *two witnesses: These are two olive trees, and the two candlesticks, that stand before the Lord of the earth*, xi. 4. Henoch and Elias are compared to *olive trees;* because, as olive trees yield the unctuous substance of oil, so these two powerful preachers will enrich mankind with the streams of the grace of God, aptly represented by the richness of oil. They are also said to be the *two candlesticks that stand before the Lord*, or God, *of the earth;* because as candlesticks are set up to diffuse light, so they will carry the light of faith to the nations of the earth. Here the apostle applies to them a passage in the prophecy of Zachary: *These are two sons of oil, who stand before the Lord of the whole earth*, Zach. iv. 14.

St. John proceeds: *And if any man will hurt them*, the two witnesses, *fire shall come out of their mouths, and shall devour their enemies: And if any man will hurt them, in this manner must he be slain.*

These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and they have power over waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues

as often as they will. Apoc. xi. 5, 6. Here are expressed the miraculous powers, with which the *two witnesses*, Henoch and Elias, will be vested. Such powers will be necessary, to enable them to prove their mission, and to give weight to their preaching. Every messenger, who appears with a new commission from God, is always furnished with unquestionable proofs of such his commission: and these proofs are no other than miraculous works. Thus did our Saviour, the apostles, and first planters of Christianity prove the divine authority of their mission, and the truth of their doctrine. Every new teacher who comes destitute of such a sanction, can claim no credit, but will be deemed an impostor.

Among the numerous miracles Henoch and Elias will perform, here is particular mention of some. If any one offers to *hurt them*, to injure them, or attempts to seize them in order to put them to death, *fire will come out of their mouths*, or they will command fire to come forth and *devour those enemies.* The same terrible punishment Elias, while on earth, inflicted upon the fifty men, whom king Ochozias sent to apprehend him. The captain of the fifty men said to Elias: *man of God, the king has commanded that thou come down. Elias answering, said to the captain of the fifty: If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven and consumed him and the fifty that were with him.* 4 Kings, i. 9, 10. The second miracle of Henoch and Elias, mentioned in our text, is, that they will *shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy.* At their command, no rain will fall during the three years and a half of their preaching; which drought will naturally produce a famine. This calamity they will probably be inspired to call for, in order to make mankind sensible of the wrath of God that is armed against them, to induce them to enter into themselves, and withdraw from their evil ways. Elias had formerly worked the same wonder, as we learn from the third book of Kings, where he is introduced speaking to Achab, king of Israel, in the following mannner: *Elias the Thesbite*

said to Achab: as the Lord liveth, the God of Israel, in whose sight I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to the words of my mouth, 3 Kings, xvii. 1. This drought, announced by Elias, lasted three years and a half, as we learn from St. Luke's gospel, c. 4. v. 25. and St. James's epistle, c. 5. v. 17. The third miracle ascribed to the two wonder-workers, is *the turning waters into blood.* This was also performed in Egypt by Moses. In fine, it is said, they will have power *to strike the earth with all plagues as often as they will.* Here is then a general power put into their hands to inflict on mankind whatsoever calamities and disasters they may judge proper, either for their own defence, or to punish the enemies of God, or to bring men back to a sense of religion. Such surprising wonders worked by the hands of Henoch and Elias will undoubtedly make impression upon mankind, and being enforced by a vigorous preaching will bring many to repentance.

The preceding observations show us then, who are the *two witnesses* spoken of by St. John, and what will be at least, in part, the object of their mission. If a further confirmation be demanded, we have for vouchers all antiquity. We may begin with St. Justin, who says: "Our Saviour himself teaches that Elias will "come; and we know what will happen towards the "time that our Lord Jesus is to come from heaven in "his glory." *Dial. cum Tryph.* Tertullian speaks in the following manner: "Henoch and Elias have been "taken away, nor do we find any account of their dy-"ing, because their death has been delayed: but they "must, however, one day die, that by their blood Anti-"christ may be extinguished." *De anima,* c. 50. St. Hyppolitus, martyr, says: "St. John Baptist was the "precursor of the first coming of Jesus Christ, and "Elias and Henoch will be the precursors of the se-"cond." *Orat. de Antichristo.* St. Ephrem comforts us by saying: "God in his mercy will send Henoch "and Elias, who will exhort mankind not to believe in "Antichrist." *Serm. de Antichr.* Lactantius seems to indicate Elias in the following words: "When the

" end of time will be approaching, God will send a great " prophet, to recall mankind to the knowledge of their " God, and who will have power of doing great won- " ders." *Instit.* lib. 7. c. 17. St. Hilary, explaining the words of our Saviour, says: " Christ told his disci- " ples that *Elias would come and re-establish all things*, " that is, that Elias would come to bring back all the " Israelites that remain, to the knowledge of their " God." Cap. 17. in Matt. St. Jerome tells that, " according to the prophecy of Malachy, Elias will ap- " pear before the second coming of our Saviour, and " will announce the approach of judgment." In Matth. xi. And in another place: " When *the ful-* " *ness of the Gentiles will be come in, all Israel shall be* " *saved;* because then the prophet Elias will come, " and will reconcile and turn the heart of the fathers to " their children, and the heart of the children to their " fathers, and the new people will be re-united to the " ancient." In cap. 4. Zach. And in his letter to St. Marcella, he tells her that, " according to the Apoca- " lypse, Henoch and Elias are to come again, and then " to die." We read in St. Ambrose that, " the beast, " which is Antichrist, will rise up from the abyss to " fight against Elias and Henoch, who will have been " sent again upon earth to give testimony to Jesus " Christ, as we learn from the Apocalypse of St. John." In Psalm 45. St. Augustin informs us of the opinion of his times: " Nothing is more common," says he, " in the discourse of the faithful, than that the Jews " will be converted to the faith of Christ by the great " prophet Elias: for it is with reason believed, that he " is yet living, and is expected to appear before the " coming of our Saviour to judgment." *Deciv. Dei*, lib. 20. c. 19. And again: " It is believed that Henoch " and Elias will return to pay the common debt of na- " ture, that, though their death has been deferred, they " will nevertheless die." Ad. cap. 6. Gen. St. John Chrysostom tells us: " The prophets announce two " comings of Christ, and say that Elias will be the " forerunner of the second." In Matth. hom. 58. St. Prosper writes as follows: " As God sent against Pha-

" raoh two witnesses, Moses and Aaron; and against " Nero two witnesses, St. Peter and St. Paul; so like- " wise he will send against Antichrist two witnesses, " Henoch and Elias." *Dimid. Temp.* c. 13. In fine, St. Gregory the Great speaks thus on the same subject: " Those two eminent preachers, Henoch and Elias, " have been taken away, and their death delayed, that " they may return to preach in the last days. It is of " them that St. John says in the Apocalypse: *These* " *are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks that* " *stand before the Lord of the earth:* Of whom Christ " has promised one in the gospel, saying: *Elias will* " *come, and will restore all things:* They are two stars, " that are covered and do not appear at present, but will " appear hereafter for the advantage of the world, and " great numbers of Jewish people will be converted to " the faith." In Job lib. 9. c. 3. Thus do the ancient fathers agree in asserting the return of Henoch and Elias, and in explaining the functions of their ministry. The same has been the general language of ecclesiastical writers, in all succeeding ages.

Hence then appears the absurd presumption of those, who, from their enmity to the Catholic communion, have asserted the *two witnesses to be*, not two single persons, but the whole succession of heretics, who in different ages have revolted from the mother Church, and opposed her doctrine.

These two messengers of God, these *two candlesticks that stand before the Lord of the earth*, will therefore be two great lights that will shine in the Church of Christ in the last age. Vested with the divine commission, they will enter upon their ministry with extraordinary vigour and zeal. Henoch will proceed forth to preach penance to different nations; while Elias will chiefly employ his labours at Jerusalem and in Judæa for the conversion of the Jews, which he will successfully effect by the energy of his preaching, by the power of his miracles, and the abundance of divine graces which will then flow in upon that people. They, recovering themselves as from a profound sleep, and opening their eyes to the bright light which Elias will expose to

them, they will see their past blindness, will be confounded at their past errors, and will be deeply touched at their long ingratitude to their God. They will then recollect, in bitterness of heart, what the Almighty had formerly urged to them, pre-admonishing them of their late unhappy state. *Behold, the hand of the Lord is not shortened that it cannot save, neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have divided between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he should not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity.* Isai. lix. 1, 2, 3. They will acknowledge the justice of this reproach, making the following humble reply: *Therefore has judgment been far from us.—We looked for light, and behold darkness: brightness, and we have walked in the dark. We have groped for the wall, and, like the blind, we have groped as if we had no eyes: we have stumbled at noon-day, as in darkness.* Ibid. v. 9, 10. From the full and clear instructions of Elias, they will evidently see that all the different characters, ascribed by the prophets to the Messiah, are found in Jesus Christ; they will acknowledge his miracles; and in deep anguish will bewail the obstinacy of their forefathers, who shut their eyes to such evidence, and with unparalleled impiety put to death the author of life, and in consequence entailed upon their posterity such long and severe judgments. In viewing that horrible crime, committed against the sacred person of Christ, they will break out into sorrowful lamentations and tears of compunction. *I will pour out upon the house of David,* says God, *and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of prayers: and they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced: and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for an only son; and they shall grieve over him, as the manner is to grieve for the death of the first-born. In that day there shall be a great lamentation in Jerusalem.* Zach. xii. 10, 11. In fine, the Jews, now totally convinced of the whole truth of Christianity, will unite in offering up their adoration to Jesus Christ, and with a full heart confess him to be the eternal Son of God, the seed of Abraham, the race of David, the

king of Israel, the desired of all nations, the promised Messiah and Saviour of the world.

Thus, that new-modelled people, after passing through the successive steps of surprise, confusion, and repentance, will at last rise up to a state of gladness and exultation, at the view of their present happiness. In a tide of joy they will send up their praises to heaven, and will sing a canticle of thanksgiving, which the Almighty himself has composed for them, purposely as it would seem for this occasion, and has delivered by the pen of his prophet Isaiah.

Chap. 12. v. 1. *I will give thanks to thee, O Lord; for thou wast angry with me: thy wrath is turned away, and thou hast comforted me.*

V. 2. *Behold, God is my Saviour, I will deal confidently, and will not fear: because the Lord is my strength, and my praise, and he is become my salvation.*

V. 4. *Praise ye the Lord, and call upon his name: make his inventions known among the people: remember that his name is high.*

V. 5. *Sing ye to the Lord, for he has done great things: shew this forth in all the earth.*

V. 6. *Rejoice and praise, O thou habitation of Sion: for great is he that is in the midst of thee, the holy one of Israel.*

To which thanksgiving they will probaby join this other.

Lord, thou hast blessed thy land: thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob.

Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people: thou hast covered all their sins.

Thou hast mitigated all thy anger; thou hast turned away from the wrath of thy indignation. Psalm 84.

The great preacher and prophet Elias having thus completed that remarkable work so long before foretold, of breaking down the wall of separation that stood between the Christian and Jewish people, and uniting them in one society; of *converting the heart of the fathers to their children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, of restoring the tribes of Jacob* to the favour of their God, and so *saving all Israel;* the happy

event will be carried upon the wings of the wind over all Christendom, and the voice of exultation and praises of the Almighty will resound in every quarter of the Church.

And now Elias, having fulfilled this part of his ministry, will be at leisure to convert his attention and labours to other nations. Nor can we sufficiently admire the divine mercy, in sending such powerful preachers as Henoch and Elias, to reform mankind, at a time that they will have become so universally corrupt, and that even idolatry will have made its appearance again upon the earth. They will admonish mankind of the approaching end of the world, will reprove them for their profligate morals and infidelity. *The ax is now laid to the root*, will they say: *every tree, therefore, that doth not yield good fruit, will be cut down and cast into the fire.* Matth. iii. 10. They will explain the prophecies, showing what part of them has been accomplished, and what remains to be fulfilled; and *they* theirselves *will prophecy.* Apoc. xi. 3. They will give notice of the then near approach of Antichrist, of his satanic efforts to make the world apostatize from God, and of the dreadful persecution he will exercise against the whole body of Christians. They will exhort the people, with all the energy of eloquence, and with a full exertion of their miraculous powers, to return from their iniquities, to do penance, to embrace the mercy of God, which soon will be no more in their power, and to guard against the terrible disasters that are ready to fall. In order to give more extent to their labours, they will stir up the zeal of the pastors and priests, and will send them forth with the commission to renew the face of the earth. The Church will therefore, at this time, exert itself on all sides with extraordinary fervour. Its ministers, endued with the apostolic spirit, will, in imitation of the Apostles, spread themselves every where, even to the remotest countries, and will make the gospel again resound in all parts of the earth. *This gospel of the kingdom*, says Christ, *shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to all nations, and then shall the consummation come*, Matth. xxiii. 14.

markable. The different parts of his attire are
to bear a relation to the events he comes to ann
He is *clothed with a cloud*, to indicate that a cl
persecution is soon to overspread the church.
crowned with a *rainbow*, as a symbol of the a
Christ has made with his Church: first, to exte
kingdom over the whole earth; *this gospel of th
dom*, said he, *shall be preached in the whole world*,
xxiv. 14: secondly, to guide her in all difficulties,
I am with you to the end of the world, Matt. xxvi
thirdly, to protect her against whatever attacks m
made upon her, *the gates of hell shall not prevail*
her, Matt. xvi. 18. Such is the similitude b
this *rainbow*, and that which Almighty God estab
after the deluge for the sign of his alliance or e
ment with mankind, never more to destroy the e
water. The angel's *face was as the sun*; a lively
of the brightness, with which the Church will sh
coming forth victorious from the great persecu
Antichrist; a brightness, arising from her inv
faith and the number of her glorious martyrs; a
ness, that will receive an additional lustre from t
traordinary zeal and sanctity produced in the Ch
by the persecution. Lastly, 'the angel's *feet w
pillars of fire*; the *feet* being the extremity of the
here is signified the ending of the world by *fire*.

which the angel is supposed to appear to the end of time.

V. 2. *And he*, the angel, *set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth.*

V. 3. *And he cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth.* The angel stands with one foot upon the land and the other upon the sea, to show that what he is going to announce, relates to the whole earth. And he *cries with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth*, to make himself heard over the whole globe.

V. 3. *And when he*, the angel, *had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.*

V. 4. *And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying to me: Seal up the things which the seven thunders have spoken, and write them not.* Here St. John is not permitted to *write*, but ordered *to seal up the things which the seven thunders had spoken:* which circumstance seems to insinuate, that the things spoken by the seven thunders were seven particulars of Antichrist's persecution; as the word *thunder* is generally used in the Apocalypse to denote some disaster; and these seven particulars being most dreadful and severe, the Almighty chose to have them *sealed up* or kept concealed, lest the foreknowledge of them should too much terrify and damp the human mind.

V. 5. *And the angel, whom I saw standing upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven,*

V. 6. *And he swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things which are therein: and the earth, and the things which are in it: and the sea, and the things which are therein: that there should be time no longer:*

V. 7. *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound the trumpet, the mystery of God should be finished, as he has declared by his servants the prophets.*

Here the angel announces in the most solemn manner the end of the world, *swearing* by the Eternal God, Creator of heaven and earth, that *time shall* soon *be no more:* and that at the sounding of the seventh Trum-

pet, the *mystery of God shall be finished* or consummated, that is, that the whole system of divine dispensations, which the Almighty had in view in creating the world, shall then be totally fulfilled, and all that he had revealed to or *declared by his prophets*, relative to his providential economy towards mankind, shall then be entirely accomplished: upon which a period will be put to the world. The earth will then be burned, as signified by the angel standing upon it with *feet which were as pillars of fire*.

We may here observe that St. John says, *in the days*, and not *in the day*, of the voice of the seventh angel sounding the trumpet; which expression seems to indicate two soundings of the trumpet, with some interval between them: the first sounding being destined to put an end to time, and to the breath of all then living; and the second, to call up the dead to judgment.

V. 8. *And I heard a voice from Heaven again speaking to me, and saying: Go, and take the book that is open, from the hand of the angel, who standeth upon the sea and the earth.*

St. John is here ordered by *a voice from heaven, to go and take the book*; the *little book*, according to the Greek text; the same book as mentioned above, ver. 2, in the angel's hand. The *little book* is the gospel, as we have said; and St. John himself here represents the ministers of the Church, who will be stirred up and stimulated by *the voice* of Henoch and Elias, and of the Church itself, to *take the little book* or the gospel in hand, and to undertake the preaching of it, which will be so particularly wanted in this depraved and dangerous time.

V. 9. *And I went to the angel, saying unto him, that he should give me the book. And he said to me: take the book, and eat it up: and it shall make thy belly bitter, but in thy mouth it shall be sweet as honey.* St. John goes and asks of the angel the little book: that is, a numerous clergy of all denominations, animated by the above *voice*, and inspired with new zeal and an apostolic spirit, ask a commission from the Church, to go and preach the gospel to all the nations of the earth. This commission is given them, as the book was given to St.

John; and they are enjoined *to go into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature*, Mark xvi. 15. And as St. John is told to *eat up the book*, these new preachers are exhorted to proceed to announce the word of God with the same ardour and eagerness, with which the hungry man flies to his food. St. John is further told by the angel that *the book will be sweet as honey in his mouth, but will make his belly bitter;* both which the apostle experienced, ver. 10. *And I took the book*, says he, *from the hand of the angel, and eat it up: and it was in my mouth sweet as honey, and when I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.* The new troop of apostolic men, in setting out on their mission, feel an inexpressible satisfaction in undertaking a work, so much to the glory of God, and to which are promised such high rewards. In this sense is the gospel *as honey in their mouth.* But afterwards, when swallowed, *it makes their belly bitter*, or causes them pains in the bowels; a figurative expression of the persecutions and severities the preachers were to suffer in consequence of their ministry. Thus then it appears, their fate will be alike to that which our Saviour destined for his Apostles, and foretold them: *They shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall put you to death:* This will be done in the great persecution of Antichrist, the *cloud* which clothed the angel.

V. 11. *And he*, the angel, *said to me*, St. John: *Thou must prophesy again to many nations, and peoples, and tongues, and kings**. Here, then, the above-mentioned ministers of the gospel, represented by the person of St. John, after having received their commission, are told to enter upon their work of preaching: *Thou must prophesy again to many nations*, &c. Let us however observe, that the expression of *prophesying* implies preaching, accompanied with the gift of *prophecy*, and of interpreting *prophecies*. We must observe also, that St. John is told, he must prophesy *again;* the meaning of which is, that as St. John himself, with the other

* In the Greek, *Thou must prophesy before nations, and peoples, and tongues, and many kings.*

Apostles and preachers, had carried the gospel through the world in the first age of Christianity, in the same manner the ministers of Christ must announce it *again* in the last age. In this general preaching, St. John's gospel and his other writings will be chiefly made use of.

In this manner will the Almighty display the riches of his mercy for the conversion of mankind, by sending them zealous preachers, endued with miraculous powers, and by such an abundant effusion of his graces, as will be proportioned to conquer the influence of the then prevailing wickedness; though the greater part of men will remain hardened in their iniquity. And now the holy work will be in some measure advanced, and a select number of people will be prepared for the afflictions and calamities, that the Almighty is upon the point of permitting, in his anger, to break out and burst upon mankind. *Behold, there come yet two woes more hereafter.* Apoc. ix. 12. Of these two remaining woes the first follows on the sounding of the sixth Trumpet; and the second or last belongs to the seventh Trumpet, the sounding of which will put an end to the world. We shall now see of what kind is the wo, announced by the sixth Trumpet.

The Sounding of the sixth Trumpet.

Apoc. Chap. IX. v. 13. *And the sixth angel sounded the trumpet; and I heard,* says St. John, *a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before the eyes of God,*

V. 14. *Saying to the sixth angel, who had the trumpet: loose the four angels, who are bound in the great river Euphrates.*

V. 15. *And the four angels were loosed, who were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year: for to kill the third part of men.*

V. 16. *And the number of the army of horsemen was twenty thousand times ten thousand. And I heard the number of them.*

V. 7. *And thus I saw the horses in the vision: and they that sat on them had breastplates of fire and of hya-*

cinth and of brimstone, and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions: and from their mouths proceeded fire, and smoke, and brimstone.

V. 18. *And by these three plagues was slain the third part of men, by the fire and by the smoke and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.*

V. 19. *For the power of the horses is in their mouths, and in their tails. For their tails are like to serpents, and have heads: and with them they hurt.*

V. 20. *And the rest of the men, who were not slain by these plagues, did not do penance for the works of their hands, that they should not adore devils and idols of gold and silver, and brass, and stone, and wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.*

V. 21. *Neither did they penance from their murders, nor from their sorceries, nor from their fornication, nor from their thefts.*

As the object of the sixth Vial is closely connected with that of the sixth Trumpet, we shall here immediately subjoin the pouring out of that Vial.

The Pouring out of the sixth Vial of the wrath of God.

Apoc. Chap. XVI. v. 12. *And the sixth Angel,* says St. John, *poured out his vial upon that great river Euphrates: and dried up the water thereof, that a way might be prepared for the kings from the rising of the sun.*

To return to the first text. The sixth Trumpet sounds, and St. John hears *a voice*, according to the Greek text *one voice from the four horns of the golden altar* of incense, that is, one voice composed of four voices, issuing from the four horns that adorned the corners of the altar, in resemblance to the altar of incense in the temple of Jerusalem. The *four horns* or corners of the altar, denote the four, that is, all the quarters of the globe; and the four voices that come from thence, represent the voices of the guardian Angels * of all the kingdoms of the earth. These An-

* It is sufficiently intimated in Scripture, that empires and nations have their tutelar Angels. St. Michael is said to be the *prince* of the Jewish people, Dan. x. 21. The Christian

gels, finding themselves frustrated in their continued labour to reform the people committed to their patronage, at last leave them as incorrigible, in the same manner as was done by the tutelar angels of Babylon and the provinces of its empire: *we would have cured Babylon*, said they, *but she is not healed: let us forsake her*, Jerem. li. 9. The Angels therefore, in the present case flying from their respective countries, and confessing the justice of the punishments now to be executed, join in *one voice* to tell the Angel who had sounded the Trumpet, *to loose the four Angels who were bound in the great river Euphrates*. These *four Angels*, who are tied fast on the river Euphrates, are four evil spirits, representing four barbarous great kingdoms or powers which they stir up to war. And these powers chiefly lie on the eastern side of the Euphrates with respect to Europe, or with respect to St. John, who was at the time of this revelation in the isle of Patmos in the Archipelago. They are said to be *bound* in the river Euphrates, because the Almighty had hitherto restrained them, and withheld them from rising up and crossing the Euphrates, to bring mischief to mankind; till the time he had fixed for executing his judgments was come. Then he lets them loose.

And the four Angels were loosed, who were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to kill the third part of men, v. 15. Here we see the cruel and bloody disposition of these four nations, as being ready *to kill the third part of men*. They are said to be ready at *an hour*, *a day*, *a month*, and *a year*, to destroy mankind; because, of these four nations, one will inhabit the banks of the Euphrates, and consequently will be ready, as may be said, at *an hour's* warning, to cross that river. A second nation, lying at some distance, will require *a day*, that is, a longer time, to prepare and march to the Euphrates. A third more distant nation, and a fourth

Church has likewise chosen the same Archangel for her patron. Daniel mentions the *prince* of Persia, which is understood to be its guardian Angel. Most of the ancient fathers have in the same manner ascribed the care of kingdoms to Angels.

the most distant of all, will respectively require still a longer space of time, expressed by *a month* and *a year*, to reach the Euphrates, cross it, and meet in the field, in order to enter upon the execution of their murderous designs.

This explication is confirmed by what is exhibited under the sixth vial. *And the sixth angel poured out his Vial upon that great river Euphrates; and dried up the water thereof, that a way might be prepared for the kings from the rising of the sun.* As at the sounding of the sixth Trumpet, the four angels or powers who had been tied upon the river *Euphrates*, are loosed; so the sixth Vial is poured out upon the *Euphrates*; and that river is immediately *dried up*, or the passage is made easy to the *kings* who come from the east. Both the Trumpet and the Vial conspire to announce four great powers or kings, coming from the eastern countries of Asia, with their hands ready for destruction. And these are the agents employed by the avenging hand of God to punish mankind for their wickedness, which will have grown to be excessive at this time. It may here be asked which are the powers here spoken of. If we may be allowed to conjecture from the present situation of empires in Asia, which however may alter, the four great powers in question may be, the Turks, whose dominions extend over the Euphrates and beyond the Tigris, the Persians, the Moguls, and the Chinese with the Chinese Tartars.

The time of loosing the four angels that were tied upon the Euphrates seems to indicate the moment in which Satan himself is loosed from the abyss or hell, where we saw, page 64, he was chained up for a thousand years. *And when the thousand years shall be finished*, says St. John, *satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and he shall go forth, and seduce the nations, which are over the four quarters of the earth*, Apoc. xx. 7. The prince of hell is therefore, by the permission of God, at this time let loose with his hellish crew, and is allowed to employ his art and power in seducing mankind to idolatry, impiety, war, and mischief. And here we date the revival of idolatry. But we have this comfort, that his time will

be short: *He must be loosed a little time*, Apoc. xx. 3. Whoever considers the circumstance of satan being loosed, needs not wonder if strange and extraordinary events follow. The first age of Christianity exhibited to us a dismal scene of his power and action. On one hand he deceived mankind by his oracles and other delusive arts; while a number of individuals groaned under the weight of his malevolence, from their being possessed by devils, as we read in the Gospels and other books of the New Testament. On another hand, we saw with what efforts he opposed the birth and growth of the Christian religion; with what fury and malice he instigated the whole Roman empire against it; what persecutions he suscitated; what torments and horrible cruelties he suggested to be employed against the Christians, and what an ocean of their blood he procured to be spilled. If such then was the power of Satan at that time, and if so much he could do by means of his infernal agents, and by his instruments, the emperors Nero, Domitian, Dioclesian, &c. why shall we be surprised to see his last efforts still stronger in the time of Antichrist, *whose coming*, as St. Paul says, *is according to the working of Satan?* 2 Thess. ii. 9. The Antichristian period is described by the ancient fathers as the most dreadful of all, and the Apocalypse plainly shows it to be so, as we shall see.

Four of satan's associates are the four bad angels we saw bound fast upon the river Euphrates, but now are united and permitted to go and raise up the four abovementioned barbarous nations, which they will instigate to carry destruction and devastation through the world.

These nations therefore arrive at different times at the Euphrates, which they cross without obstruction, and assemble in the plains on this side that river. The Antichristian prince, who had summoned them to his standard, as before related, assumes the command, and glories in being master of such a prodigious army. *And the number of the army of horsemen*, says St. John, *was twenty thousand times ten thousand. And I heard the number of them*, v. 16. See the text of the sixth Trumpet.

This army is here described as wholly consisting of cavalry; I suppose for dispatch: and the eastern people have always used much cavalry. But the number is excessive, such as has never been heard of in any instance before. We read in history of Xerxes, the Persian king, invading Greece with an army of one million of men. But an army of two hundred millions, or *twenty thousand times ten thousand*, is altogether impossible; as it is doubtful whether there be that number of men, capable of bearing arms, upon the whole globe of the earth; whereas this body of men is chiefly collected from the Asiatic countries that lie on the eastern side of the Euphrates; and yet St. John assures us, he heard their number named. *And I heard the number of them.* Such an immense multitude cannot therefore be accounted for, but by supposing a great part of it to consist of the infernal beings. And that it is so, we have reason to conclude: first, from Satan's having been let loose, as we have just now seen, and probably with him a numerous crew of his associated: secondly, from the fourth seal, which relates, as we observed, to the Antichristian prince and thus describes him: *Behold a pale horse, and he that sat upon him, his name was death, and hell followed him*, Apoc. vi. 8. Here it is expressly said, that *hell follows him.* Thirdly, the same we shall see, by and by, confirmed by the prophet Joel.

Such is the immense horrid army of the Antichristian monarch, composed of men and devils in human shape. With this he moves westwards, and is met in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem by those powers, which we mentioned had rebelled against him, and which have advanced in a body to dispute their liberty with him. Dispositions being made, both armies come to an engagement. The appearance of the monarch's troops on this occasion, and the arms they fight with, are described in a very peculiar manner by St John, in the above given text of the sixth trumpet, ver. 17. *And thus I saw the horses in the vision: and they that sat on them had breast plates of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses were as the heads lions; and from their mouths proceeded fire, and smoke,*

and brimstone. The horsemen appeared to St. John with *breastplates of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone.* By this expression is indicated the firing of carabines or such fire arms as cavalry use; which are applied to the breast when shot off. He saw the firing of these guns, in the manner that it is done now-a-days, but not being acquainted with such operations, as gunpowder was unknown in his time, he took the fire, that issued out of the muskets, to come from the horsemen's breasts, on which the muskets rested, and so thought the horsemen had breastplates of fire. The prophet here even describes to us the composition of gunpowder with its three several ingredients, viz. *brimstone* or sulphur; *fire*, or charcoal, the properest matter of fire; and *hyacinth* or saltpetre. Hyacinth, a precious stone of a purple colour, is here made use of to represent saltpetre, because saltpetre, when set on fire, emits a flame of a fine purple colour, similar to the colour of the hyacinth-stone. Here then we see revealed to St. John both the composition and use of gunpowder, to which he and all mankind at that time were strangers.

Then it is said: *and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions, and from their mouths proceeded fire, and smoke, and brimstone.* Before, we saw the description of the muskets and their fire; here is pointed out the artillery of the army, or cannon. But as St. John had not naturally any notion of such things, which did not exist in his time; and as he saw, in this vision, the whole army drawn up at a distance, and the artillery placed upon a line with the cavalry, he seemed to confound the cannon with the horses, and the cannon's mouths with the mouths of the horses, as the height of both from the ground is nearly the same*. When therefore he says *the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions*, it is the same as if he said, the mouths of the cannon were, as to the noise they made, like the mouths of roaring *lions*; and *from their mouths proceeded fire, and smoke, and brimstone*, that is, the fire of gunpowder. Hence it appears,

* He describes the appearances, as he *saw in the vision*, not the reality.

t. John in his vision, both saw the fire of the
, and heard the explosion. One may further
k, that he points out here a nice difference be-
musket gunpowder, and that used in cannon.
rst he describes as composed of fire, hyacinth, or
re, and brimstone; the second, as composed of
moke, and brimstone; that is, the musket gun-
r, which is finer, has in its composition a larger
tion of *saltpetre:* and the cannon gunpowder
is coarser, contains a larger share of charcoal
produces the *smoke*. And such, it is known, is
the composition used at this day.

s explanation is further confirmed by what fol-
n the text: *For the power of the horses is in their
and in their tails. For their tails are like to ser-
and have heads: and with them they hurt*, v. 19.
ower of the imagined *horses*, or real cannon, lying
ir *mouths* and in their *tails*, signifies that the mis-
us *power* of the cannon is directed to the object by
nouths, but takes its birth in the *tail* or breech of
nnon, where the charge is lodged: whence the
n's breech is here compared to the serpent's head
contains his venom.

*l by these three plagues was slain the third part of
ny the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone,
issued out of their mouths*, v. 18. This destructive
ment, gunpowder, the invention of latter ages,
nerefore be employed by the Antichristian army,
ng in its progress, *to slay the third part of men*,
bly the wicked. And this is conformable to what
ad under the fourth Seal: *Power was given to him
with sword, with famine, and with death* or gun-
er, *and with the beasts of the earth*, or cavalry.
. vi. 8. See the explication of that Seal.

we left the two armies engaged, a question may be
about the issue of the battle. What it will be
respect to the great hero, the Antichristian em-
, we learn from St. John, who however so closely
cts this event with that prince's alliance to the Ro-
mpire, that we must beg leave to follow our in-
l writer in joining the accounts of both together.

Chap. xiii. v. 1. *And I saw*, says St. John, *a beast coming up out of the sea, having seven heads, and ten horns and upon his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy.*

V. 2. *And the beast which I saw, was like to a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his own strength and great power.*

V. 3. *And I saw one of his heads as it were slain to death.*

The *beast* which St. John sees here rising up from the *sea*, or from the tumultuous scenes of war and the fluctuations of the world, represents the ancient pagan empire of Rome. For the *beast*, he says, has *seven heads and ten horns*; we have before shown *seven heads* are seven heathen Roman emperors, persecutors of Christianity, the last of whom will be Antichrist: and the *horns* are the northern powers that destroyed and divided among themselves the western part of that empire. *Upon his horns* were *ten diadems* or crowns; whereas, in chap. 12. v. 3. *on his heads* were *seven diadems*. This passing of the *diadems* from the *heads* to the *horns*, shows that old Rome had lost her sovereignty, which had been wrested from her emperors by those northern people who had *crowned* themselves with it. And the *beast* had *upon his heads names of blasphemy; blasphemies*, which the heathen emperors spoke against Christ; *blasphemies*, or pagan gods, which they set up in opposition to him; *blasphemies*, or divine honours, which those emperors required to be paid to themselves.

Let us take notice that St. John here gives us in abridgment the successive periods of the Roman empire. It is described, as first ruling under a succession of idolatrous *heads* or emperors, and then pulled down and divided among a number of invaders denoted by the *horns*. From them it passes to become the Antichristian empire, as appears by what follows: *And the beast which I saw*, says St. John, *was like to a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion.* But here we must previously observe, that this extraordinary *beast* is in its exterior

form made up of the three animals, the leopard, the bear, and the lion; because the empire of Rome had reduced under its dominion the countries belonging to the three successive empires of Babylon, of Persia, and of Greece, which are exhibited by the prophet Daniel under the types of those three animals. *I saw*, says Daniel, *in my vision——And four great beasts different one from another, came up out of the sea. The first was like a lioness—And behold, another beast like a bear——After this I beheld, and lo another like a leopard.* Dan. vii. 3, &c. Which three beasts here specified have always been understood to denote the three above-named empires. These empires preceded that of Rome, and then passed into its dominion; for which reason it is here represented as composed of them. Great empires are indicated by the prophets under the figure of beasts, on account of the devastation and havoc they make, like wild beasts, in the world, to raise up their dominion.

This observation premised; St. John says: *And the beast which I saw was like to a leopard;* the body of the *beast* was like unto a *leopard*, that is, the centre and capital part of the Roman empire under Antichrist will be the Grecian empire, denoted by the *leopard*. After the division of the ancient Roman state, the eastern part chiefly consisted of the territory of the ancient empire of Macedon or Greece. The Turks are now in possession of it, and so will one day be the Turkish emperor, Antichrist; and from it rises the Antichristian kingdom. Rome was destroyed with the western empire: Constantinople then became the capital of the remaining part of the Roman empire; it will be also Antichrist's capital city: and it is now the centre and seat of the Turkish, or formerly Grecian monarchy; and from this centre, conquest will be carried into those countries that formed the western part of the ancient Roman empire, and over the whole world. Thus, then, the Antichristian empire is founded on the empire of ancient Greece, at present the Constantinopolitan empire. Hence it appears why the body of the *beast* is like to a *leopard*.

St. John's description of the *beast* may receive a further elucidation from the prophecy of Daniel concerning the Roman empire, which was also represented to him under the figure of a *beast*, the fourth of those which he saw in a vision. *After this I beheld*, says he, *in the vision of the night, and lo a fourth beast, terrible and wonderful, and exceeding strong; it had great iron teeth, eating and breaking in pieces, and treading down the rest with its feet*, vii. 7. Which an angel explained to the prophet thus: *The fourth beast will be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be greater than all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down and break it in pieces*, ibid. v. 23. It is plain, that what Daniel here says of the Roman empire, has never yet been completely fulfilled. For, though the power of ancient Rome extended into Europe, Asia, and Africa, yet there remained vast countries unsubdued in each of those parts, besides America, which was not then known: consequently the Roman power did not reach over *the whole earth*, as Daniel here specifies it should. Then, though Rome sometimes treated the conquered people with severity and haughtiness, yet it cannot be said that she *devoured the whole earth, and trod it down, and broke it in pieces*. Daniel's prophecy having therefore been but partially accomplished in the ancient empire of Rome, it remains to be completed in that Roman empire, of which Antichrist will be the head, and which will extend over the whole earth.—And now it will appear that the texts of the two prophets help to explain one another. *The beast*, says St. John, *had a mouth as the mouth of a lion*, a proper animal to *devour*, as Daniel terms it. The *beast*, again, according to St. John, *had feet as the feet of a bear*, an animal that *treads down* its prey *with its feet*, as Daniel speaks of it. Lastly, the *beast*, according to St. John, *was like to a leopard*, which, with its teeth of a *lion* and claws of a *bear*, may *break in pieces*, as Daniel says of it, or tear in pieces whatever it seizes. Such will be the violence and tyranny of Antichrist's dominion when he becomes universal monarch.

But we must here further observe, that not only the

ultimate accomplishment of what belongs to the Roman empire will have its place at the time of Antichrist, but the same must be applied to the ancient empire of Greece, now represented by the Constantinopolitan or Ottoman empire, which we have shown to be the foundation and centre of the Antichristian kingdom. For, Daniel speaking of the empire of Greece, says: *It shall rule over all the world*, ii. 39; to which also alludes what he applies to it in another place: *Power was given to it*, vii. 6. But it is well known, that Alexander the Great, who reared up the Grecian empire, never *ruled over the whole world*. The extent of his dominion fell far short of it. This prophecy remains therefore to be finally completed in Antichrist, who will be the last head of both Roman and Grecian empires.

To return to our text, St. John said: *And the dragon gave him*, the beast, *his own strength*, (here the Greek adds, *and his throne,) and great powers*, v. 2. The dragon or Satan, prince of the infernal kingdom, gives his *own strength* to the *beast* or the Antichristian empire; that is, to its emperor, the Antichristian prince, and his agents; the *dragon* or Satan gives him, I say, *his own strength*, or his armies of hellish fiends to fight and act for him; in the same manner as the northern powers (Apoc. xvii. 13) gave *their strength to the beast*, that is, their armies to the Romans for their assistance.

And this is conformable to what was said under the fourth Seal: *and hell followed him*, Apoc. vi. 8. The *dragon* furthermore gives to the Antichristian emperor *his throne*, by constituting him his visible substitute, representative, and delegate, to rule and command as he pleases. In fine, the *dragon* gives him *great power*, or a surprising faculty of working counterfeit miracles, and imposing upon mankind by art and deceit; *his coming* (Antichrist's) *being*, as St. Paul tells us, *according to the working of Satan, in all power, and signs, and lying wonders*, 2 Thess. ii. 9.——St. John proceeds:

V. 3. *And I saw one of his heads as it were slain to death; and his death's wound was healed. And all the earth was in admiration after the beast.*

This *head* of the *beast* is the Antichristian monarch, as fully appears by the description that follows in this chapter; and here St. John sees him *as it were slain to death*, that is, wounded mortally, or at least so in appearance. Such then is the issue of the abovementioned battle. This accident undoubtedly spreads consternation throughout his army, and raises exultation and courage in his enemies. But these dispositions are soon reversed in consequence of what is added, *and his death's wound was healed*, his deadly wound is cured by Satan, who constantly attends him *. *And all the earth was in admiration after the beast:* the whole world is astonished at seeing or hearing the account of this extraordinary cure, which exceeded all human power and art; and thereupon a great part of mankind embrace the party of the *beast*, or of the Antichristian king. The denomination of *beast* was before appropriated to his empire, and he was *one of its heads;* but now he himself is styled the *beast*, because he is the sole and last *head* by which the *beast* lives and becomes a single animal, the other *six heads*, or former emperors, being dead. He may also be said to *come up out of the sea*, as

* If with St. Jerome, Theodoret, and others, we understand Antichrist to be the *shepherd and idol* spoken of in the following passage of the prophet Zachary: *Behold I will raise up*, says the Lord, *a shepherd in the land, who shall not visit what is forsaken, nor seek what is scattered, nor heal what is broken, nor nourish that which stands; and he shall eat the flesh of the fat ones, and break their hoofs. O shepherd and idol, that forsakes the flock! The sword upon his arm and upon his right eye: his arm shall quite wither away, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened*, Zach. xi. 16, 17. This passage, we apprehend, may point out to us how and in what manner the Antichristian king is wounded, viz. *the sword upon his arm and upon his right eye;* and St. John tells us, *he had the wound by the sword*, Apoc. xiii. 14. Perhaps he receives a stroke upon the head, which reaches down to the right eye and opens the scull. And though he is cured by the operation of the devil, yet, as diabolical operations usually are, the cure may remain imperfect; as seems to be indicated by what is added: *his arm shall quite wither away, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.* How different are the works of the finger of God, not done by halves, but complete and perfect!

was said of the *beast* in ver. 1, because we suppose him to be born in Crim Tartary, upon the Black Sea, and to succeed to the Ottoman empire of Constantinople, which city also stands on the sea.

The people were seized with astonishment, as just abovementioned, ver. 4. *And they adored the dragon, which gave power to the beast: and they adored the beast, saying: who is like to the beast? and who shall be able to fight with him?*

They suppose the cure of the deadly wound to have been performed by the *dragon*, or Satan; and they immediately worship the *dragon* for his having shown such a visible protection to this monarch, and vested him with power, authority, and dominion, beyond any monarch that ever existed. Upon these considerations they also proclaim this prince superior to every other creature, invincible, a God, and adore him, saying: *who is like to the beast? and who shall be able to fight with him?* This abominable idolatrous worship may the more easily take place, as we have already observed that idolatry will probably have been revived in the world somewhat before this time by the working of Satan, from the moment of his having been let loose.

Before we proceed further, let us observe from what we have already related out of the 13th chapter of the Apocalypse, that the Roman empire, which had been long ago destroyed, is here revived anew under the Antichristian monarch, who is here styled the *head* of the *beast*. And this is agreeable to the prediction of chap. 17. v. 8, of the Apocalypse, (see page 107.) *The beast which thou sawest, was, and is not, and shall come up out of the bottomless pit, and go into destruction: And the inhabitants of the earth (whose names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world) shall wonder, seeing the beast, that was, and is not;* here the Greek text adds, *and yet is*, which makes the sense more complete: The Roman empire, in its last period, that is, the Antichristian empire, is here said to rise from *the bottomless pit*, or abyss of hell, because Satan, who lately came from thence, is the soul and actuator of that empire, as he was of the same Roman empire in

its first period: And we have just now seen, that effectually *the dragon* or Satan *gave him*, the Antichristian emperor, *his own strength, and his throne, and great power*. Besides, by Satan this Roman and Antichristian empire is also made the empire of idolatry, as it had been under the ancient Roman emperors; for we saw above, that *they adored the dragon, who gave power to the beast; and they adored the beast*. This extraordinary re-appearance of that powerful and idolatrous empire, so long ago lost, and its signal elevation by the power and management of the devil, seem to form a subject of great astonishment to the world, and the chief inducement to idolatry; for it is here said, *the inhabitants of the earth (whose names are not written in the book of life) shall wonder, seeing the beast, that was, and is not, and yet is:* and again; *And all the earth was in admiration after the beast*, above, v. 3. But here the servants of God ought to admire the divine bounty and providence, and may receive comfort from what is here added, that the *beast* or idolatrous Antichristian empire will soon *go into destruction*.—We now likewise see appear in the course of the Apocalyptical history, that remarkable personage, the Antichristian emperor, who is the seventh and last head of the idolatrous Roman empire, conformably to what we were admonished to expect, in chapter 17, v. 10, *five* (of the heads) *are fallen, one is, and the other is not yet come: and when he is come, he must remain a short time*. See page 108. Happy indeed for mankind, that *he must remain* but *a short time*.

To return to the issue of the battle fought, in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, between the Antichristian emperor's army and that of his enemies, we saw him, as it were mortally wounded, then cured by satan, and soon re-appearing at the head of his troops, upon which follows almost a general defection of the people, and of his enemies, who came over to his party. In consequence of this, we suppose that the small remainder of the adverse army flies before him, and he enters Jerusalem.

And now we are arrived, as we conceive, at the period when this ambitious and impious hero declares him-

self formally *Antichrist*, that is, enemy to Christ. Enraged, on one side, at his having been wounded and thrown into the jaws of death, perhaps by Christian troops; enraged again by the defection of the Jews from him, who before had owned him for their Messiah, but whom he finds now become Christians, and renouncing all connexion with him, looking upon him as the most audacious and basest of impostors: on the other hand, elated by his extraordinary cure, and seeing himself guarded and supported by the whole power of the devil, and multitudes all around him acknowledging the same, he swells with the spirit of pride and arrogance, with which he is inspired by satan who has entered into him. He thinks himself all-powerful. In these satanic dispositions he resolves to acknowledge no superior, in heaven or on earth; and in that view he proceeds to a temple in Jerusalem, some Christian Church, which he enters, and there extolling his own supreme authority, his dominion, his unlimited power over every thing, he proclaims himself God, and ordains divine homage and worship to be paid to his person. This we learn from St. Paul, who thus speaks of him: *The man of sin, the son of perdition, who opposeth and is lifted up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God* *, *shewing himself as if he were God* †, 2 Thess. 2, 3, 4. He thus imitates, but far surpasses in arrogance, Caius Caligula and other Roman

* In the Greek, *he sitteth in the temple of God as God.*

† Would not one suspect that the devil has suggested the titles usually assumed by the Sultans or Turkish emperors of Constantinople, viz. *God upon earth, the shadow of God, the giver of all earthly crowns*, &c. as thus these emperors anticipate in some measure what belongs to their last successor, Antichrist, who will arrogate to himself the real deity and power expressed by these titles.

I shall here add a copy of such like assuming titles, translated verbatim from the Arabic language, as appears in the following assent for the armistice agreed on and sent by the Grand Vizir to his excellency Count Peter Alexander Romanzow.

"Firmly relying upon the assistance of the only, indivisible, "one God, to whom nothing is comparable, and who created

emperors, his ancient predecessors, who impiously claimed to themselves divine honours.

From the above passage of St. Paul, some have inferred that Antichrist will rebuild the great temple of Je-

" all things, and declared and revealed his divine will through " the great Mahomet. Amen.

" The most righteous, and most powerful, and great emperor and Sultan, created to this dignity by the eternal election " of the Almighty; gifted with the imperial and philanthropic qualities for exhibiting the welfare and prosperity of the " holy state of Mecca; and invested with the highest power, " and reigning over an infinite multitude of nations, both by " land and sea; who is the wisest among the righteous Sultans, the most deservedly elected, and worthiest among " all the regents; sovereign lord and ruler over all the princes in the world; the only legislator and sovereign, chosen " to it out of the most serene pedigree in the world; all his " servants, that is to say, all the inhabitants of the world, return him hearty thanks for the least grace he shows to them, " and especially for the grace he shows to them by the present declaration, through me, Mahomet, his unworthy servant and slave. Whereas, the extreme need and misery of " his subjects, which are intrusted to him by the eternal Creator himself, went to his heart. According to his imperial " philanthropy, be all the world witness, and learn morals. " How violent the love for his subjects being in his most " noble heart, by thus condescending, through the great love " he bears towards his servants, to agree upon the present " armistice: he declares, before the eyes of the wise and virtuous men, whom he has made free, and exempted from " their servitude, that, had it been possible, according to his " honour and glory, he would have laid before them the circumstances and events which have pleased God and the " great Mahomet, and which have been the cause of breaking " the peace between the everlasting Ottomon empire and the " Russian inhabitants. After which unreasonable and unclear behaviour in the eyes of God from the Russian side, " the sovereign of the globe, my master, lighted the fire of " war; but, alas! what homicide and blood-shed on both " sides hath there been during these last four or five years?

" And although it has been predestinated so to be in the " eternal counsel of God, yet as it requires a reconciliation " through the great prophet Mahomet, and seeing that at last " the most famous prince, the greatest of the princes who believe in JESUS, the only elected man of the people of the " Messiah, the only decider of the business and rights of the " nations of Nazareth, to whom my master allows glory and

rusalem. But, if that temple is ever to be rebuilded, probably it will not be done until after the ravages and persecution of Antichrist, according to that prophecy of Daniel: *And there shall be in the temple, the abomination of desola ion: and the desolation shall continue even to the*

" majesty during his pious will; the high, the happiest go-
" vernor, and emperor of Germany, and likewise the king
" of Prussia, the end of both which princes, so that they may
" be led into the way of salvation; and they having looked
" into the terrible blood-shedding, and written constantly to
" their minister, residing at the court of the most illustrious
" Porte, to cry for mercy before the most brilliant and glori-
" ous throne of my master, whose unworthy slave I am. And
" as it was at the same time the most ardent wishes and long-
" ing from the throne of the glorious princess, who is so high
" esteemed by the princes who believe in Jesus, who reigns
" over many nations of Nazareth, and governs the people of
" the Messiah, with honour, and with heroic mind; and who
" acknowledges her errors and unjust contrivances against
" the most illustrious Porte, namely, the empress of Russia,
" whose end also be blessed, and may she be led into the
" way of salvation! What a glory for the great and high,
" mighty, just, wise, and virtuous sultan, to see all the na-
" tions of Europe represented by the ministers of the princes
" surrounding his throne, and sighing for his gracious will!
" but not to gain the favour of all those princes, not yet influ-
" enced by their power or magnificence, hath been the cause
" of his gracious will; for nothing but the love for his sub-
" jects in particular, and for mankind in general, hath he de-
" clared his most pious and gracious will to agree upon an
" armistice, as a beginning and the first stone to peace and
" harmony, which he having thus accepted of, the whole
" world is rejoiced, and the nations bring him thanks to his
" most glorious throne; and to me, his unworthy slave, he
" gave a full power, to which I have appointed one of the
" members of the highest divan, the president of the college
" of Revillon, a commander of six regiments of horse, the
" most worthy Seu Abdal Rerim Effendi, whose glory may
" increase! who sent to me the nine articles of it after it
" was agreed upon; and as I found them consisting with the
" honour, glory, and magnificence of my master, whose un-
" worthy slave I am, and who gave me full power to give my
" assent in his gloriful name, therefore I say, with joy and
" praise to God, and to the great prophet Mahomet, he may
" continue the peace among mankind, and increase the glory
" of the wisest and most just Sultan, &c. &c."

consummation, and to the end, ix. 27. Besides, one may observe that in the New Testament, the great temple of Jerusalem is always expressed by the Greek word ΙΕΡΟΝ, and a common temple or church by the word ΝΑΟΣ, as in the present passage of St. Paul; which gives us reason to think, that the apostle does not here speak of the great temple.

However that may be, Antichrist proceeds to forbid any other deity to be acknowledged but himself, and prohibits all worship of the Supreme Being, all exercise of the Christian religion, and particularly the sacrifice of the altar, because Christ is there personally adored as God. These presumptuous extravagancies were, in general, foretold by the prophet Daniel: *From the time*, says he, *when the continual sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination unto desolation shall be set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred ninety days*, xii. 11. The *continual* or daily *sacrifice* of the altar, is here said *to be taken away*; and the *abomination unto desolation is set up*, that is, the *abominable* worship of a man *is set up*, in the place of that of God. A similar impiety and *abomination* was formerly practised by the idolatrous king and implacable enemy of the Jews, Antiochus Epiphanes, who *forbad holocausts and sacrifices, and atonements, to be made in the temple of God——and set up the abominable idol of desolation* * *upon the altar of God*, 1 Maccab. i. 47, &c. 57. We seem to be also forewarned of Antichrist's abomination, as we observed under the sixth seal, by our Saviour himself, when he said: *When therefore you shall see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, he that readeth, let him understand: Then they that are in Judea, let them flee to the mountains*, Matth. xxiv. 15, 16. Upon these words of our Saviour, St. Chrysostom speaks thus: "For three years and six months, the Christian sacri- "fice must be taken away by Antichrist, and the Chris- "tians flying away before him into the deserts, there "will be no one to frequent the Church or to offer the "oblation to God." Hom. 49 in Matth. 24.

* The statue of Jupiter Olympius.

It is worth our notice what we further learn from the above-cited passage of Daniel, that *from the time*, when the daily sacrifice will be suppressed, and the abomination set up, *there will be a thousand two hundred* and *ninety days*, to the end of Antichrist's persecution, which Daniel had spoken of in the preceding verse. That persecution will last three years and a half, as we shall see hereafter. Hence then, if the year be supposed to consist of 365 days, three years and a half make 1278 days, which the number 1290 exceeds by twelve; so that there will be an interval of twelve days between the time when Antichrist sets himself up for God in the temple, and the beginning of his persecution. But this interval will be thirty days, if the year be reckoned only of 360 days, or forty two months of thirty days each, which round way of counting is usual with the prophets.

As therefore a most cruel persecution is soon to follow, and all sorts of other means will likewise be employed by that monster of iniquity, Antichrist, to force the worship of his pretended Divinity upon the world, the Almighty sends a most strong and pathetic admonition to mankind, to warn them against that seduction: *And I saw*, says St. John, *another angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the eternal Gospel, to preach unto them that sit upon the earth, and over every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people:*

Saying with a loud voice: fear the Lord, and give him honour, because the hour of his judgment is come: and adore ye him, that made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of waters. Apoc xiv. 6, 7.

The angel here may represent Henoch and his attendants, the pastors of the Church, who with great vigour will preach up, first in Jerusalem and then in all other nations, *the eternal Gospel* or *everlasting covenant*, Isai. xxiv. 5; that is, the eternal law, founded in nature itself, that forbids divine worship to be paid to any creature, as being the incommunicable right of the Supreme Being. They will say: Fear not this domineering boaster; but, *Fear the Lord, and give him honour.* They will say: adore not this impostor; who deceitfully pretends to a power over heaven, earth, sea, and

fountains of water; but, *adore him, that really made heaven, and earth, the sea, and the fountains of waters*, and has power to do with them what he pleases. These exhortations the preachers will enforce with that peculiar reason here given, *because the hour of his judgment is come*, because the time will soon come, in three years and a half, when the *judgment* of God will fall upon this *man of sin*, this *son of perdition*, Antichrist, and he shall be exterminated.

Antichrist finding that many, particularly the Jews, refuse to pay him divine honour, he will first endeavour to bring them over by persuasive methods. For that purpose he will avail himself of the *power which the dragon gave him*, as we saw above, of performing wonders and working false miracles. Many prodigies, therefore, and extraordinary performances, by the devil's operation, he will exhibit; *whose coming*, says St. Paul, *is according to the working of Satan, in all power, and signs, and lying wonders*, 2 Thess. ii. 9. By the dazzling appearance of these wonderful operations, many will be staggered in their faith, and will be seduced to worship this mock-god, as we seem to learn from our Saviour, who said: *There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch as to deceive, if possible, even the elect*, Matth. xxiv. 24. But Christ, whose Providence is never wanting to his Church, will interpose his power to baffle that of the devil and Antichrist. He will invest many of the Christian preachers, particularly Henoch and Elias, with extraordinary miraculous powers. As Moses and Aaron were sent by the Almighty to contend with Pharaoh and his magicians, and to rescue the Israelites from slavery; so will Elias and Henoch be the two chief messengers whom Christ will employ to oppose his enemy, Antichrist, and to preserve the elect from falling into his snares. And as the magicians of Egypt, with all their demoniacal charms and incantations, were vanquished by the signal superiority of the miracles of Moses and Aaron; so will the prodigies of Antichrist be eclipsed and confounded by the far greater number and splendour of the miracles of Elias and

Henoch. *And I will give*, says Christ, *unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.—And if any man will hurt them, fire shall come out of their mouths, and shall devour their enemies. And if any man will hurt them, in this manner must he be slain. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and they have power over waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues as often as they will.* Apoc. xi. 3, 56. These miracles we have before explained, see page 156. In conformity to this passage, St. Ephron speaks thus: "God in his mercy will send "Elias and Henoch, who will openly exhort the people "not to believe in Antichrist." Serm. de Antichr. And St. Ambrose: "Henoch and Elias are destined to "be the Apostles of the last times: for they are to be "sent, before the last coming of Christ, to prepare the "people of God, and to animate all the Churches to re-"sist Antichrist." In Ep. 1. ad. Corinth. c. 4. St. Gregory the Great likewise says, that "Elias and He-"noch will appear upon the stage of the world to op-"pose Antichrist." In Job, lib. 15. c. 36. When the powers of the Almighty and Satan come in competition, the latter must certainly vanish. Whence it follows that those only will be deluded, who wilfully shut their eyes to the clear light of evidence; and so we are informed by St. Paul: *whose coming*, Antichrist's, *is according to the working of Satan, in all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and in all seduction of iniquity to them that perish: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. Therefore God shall send them the operation of error, to believe lying; that all may be judged who have not believed the truth, but have consented to iniquity.* 2 Thess. ii. 9, 10, 11.

Antichrist seeing all his wonderful operations baffled by the shining evidence of Henoch's and Elias's miracles, and perceiving that multitudes of Christians refuse to acknowledge his godhead, he swells with anger, and being actuated by the hellish fiend that possesses him, he arrogantly boasts of his pre-eminence over all other men that have ever existed, of the greatness of his em-

pire, of the number of his armies, of his command over all the beings and works of nature, and even presumes to extol his own power above that of the Almighty; as it seems to follow from what St. John proceeds to say of him:

Chap. xiii. v. 5. *And there was given to him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies.* And St. Paul calls him, *the man of sin, the son of perdition, who opposeth and is lifted up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped,* 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. Daniel also gives us much the same picture of him. *And behold,* says that prophet, *eyes like the eyes of a man were in this little horn, and a mouth speaking great things,* vii. 8. We have before observed that Antichrist is meant by the *little horn,* which is here said to have *eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things;* the *eyes of a man,* and *a mouth,* indicate a man, one individual man, who *speaks great things,* as we have just heard from St. John. Daniel goes on painting his character: *and he shall think himself able to change times and laws,* vii. 25. He will imagine himself powerful enough *to change times,* the course of times and seasons of the year, as night into day, winter into summer, &c. and *to change laws,* to alter the laws by which nature acts, by which the sun, and moon, and other planets, move, to alter their times of rising and setting, to raise up the harvest in winter, and to make the earth barren in summer, and to command the clouds to rain or not at his pleasure; in fine, he will boast of having power to reverse the whole order of nature. And perhaps he will attempt some particular of this sort, which, by the devil's aid, he may apparently effect.

V. 5. *And power was given him to do two and forty months.* He is permitted by the Almighty *to do* what he pleases during *two and forty months,* or three years and a half: or else, as the Greek text has it, *power was given him to make war two and forty months,* which he resolves to do with the utmost violence and cruelty.

V. 6. *And he opened his mouth unto blasphemies, against God, to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle, and them that dwell therein.* Here is a shocking picture of

Antichrist's superlative arrogance and unparalleled impiety. Inflated with the venom that Satan instils into his heart, and furious against the Christians, whom, with all his art and feigned miracles, he has not been able to gain over, he now, in rage, flies in the face of Heaven. He pours out *blasphemies against God;* Lucifer-like, he revolts against God, and *blasphemes* him; he *blasphemes his name*, that is, religion, which commands homage to be paid to the Supreme Being alone; he *blasphemes his tabernacle*, or Heaven, the seat of God, and his Church on earth; *he blasphemes them that dwell in Heaven*, that is, the angels and saints. Thus this monster of iniquity, like a swollen sea that overtops all boundaries, rises up against God, and every thing that is holy. Daniel with one stroke of his pencil draws much the same picture of him: *And he will speak words against the most High*, vii. 25. He seems to have sucked up all the virulence and spirit of impiety of the preceding ages. In the fourth Vial, we heard *blasphemies* against *the name of God*, Apoc. xvi. 9; and in the fifth Vial, *blasphemies* against *the God of Heaven*, Apoc. xvi. 11. Both these sorts of blasphemy Antichrist uses, and adds others to them.

St. John seems to intimate, in his first epistle, some particular instances of this man's presumption and opposition to Christ. He will deny that Jesus is the Christ or the Messiah, and will thereby endeavour to take away the belief of the Blessed Trinity. *Who is a liar* *, *but he who denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is Antichrist* †, *who denieth the Father and the Son*, 1 Ep. ii. 22. He will deny that the Son of God took human flesh: *Every spirit that dissolveth Jesus* ‡, *is not of God: and this is Antichrist* §, *of whom you have heard that he comes and is now already in the world*, 1 Ep. iv. 3. Here St. John says that Antichrist, who they have heard will one day come into the world, *is now already in the world;*

* In the Greek text, *the liar.*

† In the Greek, *the Antichrist.*

‡ In the Greek, *that doth not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.*

§ In the Greek, *and this is the spirit of Antichrist.*

that is, there are already in the world men, who broach such impious doctrine about Christ, as Antichrist himself will do. Such were the Simonians and Corinthians in St. John's time. St. Paul has likewise sufficiently described the detestable character of Antichrist, calling him *the man of sin, that sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself as if he were God—whose coming is according to the working of Satan*, 2 Thess. c. 2. And in a similar strain have also the ancient fathers spoke of him. "Satan," says St. Jerome, "will wholly possess Antichrist," in Dan. c. 7. St. Chrysostom says: "Antichrist will be a man that will possess all the power "of Satan." St. Irenæus is very ample in the description of his character: Adversus Hær. lib. 5. c. 25.—— St. John proceeds:

V. 7. *And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.* Here Antichrist has power allowed him to persecute *the saints*, or good Christians, and *to overcome them*, or put them to death with great cruelty and torments; and this we shall soon see him putting in execution.

V. 7. *And power was given him over every tribe, and people, and tongue, and nation.*

His *power*, his dominion will extend over every nation and people of the globe. Already monarch of a great part of the kingdoms of the earth, when he commences Antichrist; the rest he will now subdue, and thus will become master to tyrannize over mankind, and persecute religion in every corner of the world. We shall here just remark, that the reason, why St. John in this and several other places of the Apocalypse uses the four terms *tribe, people, tongue*, and *nation*, seems to be to indicate the four great divisions of the earth, Europe, Asia, Africa, and America; the term *people* probably being put for Europe, *nation* for Asia, *tongue* for Africa, and *tribe* for America. And the order in which the above terms stand in this place, perhaps indicates the progressive course of Antichrist's conquests.

V. 8. *And all that dwell upon the earth, adored him* *,

* In the Greek text, *will adore him.*

whose names are not written in the book of life of the lamb, which was slain from the beginning of the world.

Here we see such a general apostacy of mankind that, except those *whose names are written in the book of life of the lamb, which was slain from the beginning of the world*, in the decrees of God, that is, except the predestined, all the rest yield to the tyranny and persecution of Antichrist, and *adore him* as a God.

The preceding account of Antichrist's character, power, and actions, doubtless must appear to every one very alarming: nevertheless, we further learn from St. John, that this *man of sin*, this *son of perdition*, notwithstanding his exorbitant power and satanic malice, as if yet not sufficiently armed for mischief, will acquire an associate of the same stamp of himself, who will perform the function of his principal minister, and be his chief aid in the course of his future proceedings.

Chap. xiii. v. 11. *And I saw*, says St. John, *another beast like a lamb, coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns, and he spoke as a dragon.* The first beast, ver. 1, appeared to St. John rising out of the *sea*, because it was the figure of a great empire, or a great emperor, viz. Antichrist: this second *beast* therefore, rising out of the *earth*, denotes a private man. *And he had two horns, like a lamb;* horns are an emblem of strength or power, and these *two horns* signify the power of speech and the power of false miracles, with which this man is endued. These powers are similar, but only in appearence, to those which the true *lamb* or Jesus Christ eminently possessed; the miracles of this new man or second *beast* being no more than impostures, works performed by the intervention of the devil; and his speech, though eloquent and engaging, is artful, hypocritical, malicious, and deceitful; for *he speaks like a dragon*, or like the devil that deluded Eve. This man is the *false prophet*, as St. John calls him in chap. 19, v. 20, and other places, that attend Antichrist; is his principal agent, and like him receives all his power from the devil. St. Irenæus mentions him thus: "St. John in the Apocalypse "speaking of Antichrist's attendant, whom he calls the "false prophet, says; *he spoke like a dragon*, and *execut-*

" *ed all the power of the former beast in his sight*, &c." as in the following verse. Adv. Hær. l. v. c. 28.

V. 12. *And he executed all the power of the former beast in his sight: and he caused the earth and them that dwell therein, to adore the first beast, whose wound to death was healed.* The false prophet, to enhance the credit of his master, will perform in his presence the same wonders that Antichrist himself is capable of doing, and thus will prevail on *them that dwell on the earth, to adore the first beast, whose wound to death was healed*, that is, Antichrist, who had been mortally wounded, and cured. Perhaps also from the expression, *he caused the earth to adore the first beast*, it may be inferred that the false prophet by his enchantments will make the inanimate beings, such as trees and other things, appear to pay a kind of homage to Antichrist.

V. 13. *And he did great signs, so that he made also fire come down from heaven unto the earth in the sight of men.* Such then will be the power of the false prophet that he will *make fire come down* from the sky, by the help of the devil. " What we read in the book of Job," says St. Ambrose, " that the devil brought down fire " from heaven by the divine permission, he will do the " same in the last days by his instruments, Antichrist " and Antichrist's followers."

The false prophet seems here to imitate one of Henoch's and Elias's miracles; but the miracles of these *two witnesses* far outshine his in number, lustre, and evidence, and will be the means of preserving from seduction the *men of good will*, but will be the instrument of error to those who, as St Paul says, *receive not the love of truth that they may be saved.* For,

V. 14. *And he seduced them that dwell on the earth, for the signs which were given him to do in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make the image of the beast* *, *which had the wound by the sword, and lived.* By *them that dwell on the earth* seem to be understood those who wilfully shut their eyes

* In the Greek, *an image to the beast, which hath the wound*, &c.

to the truth, and them he seduces by *the signs* which he is allowed power to *do in the sight of the beast*, and prevails with them to raise *an image* or a statue to Antichrist, and to adore it. He enforces his wonderful performances, by representing his master as certainly God, since he had been mortally *wounded by the sword*, and was nevertheless *alive* and well. But this sophister is not able to prove the cure to have been complete, for it is here said that *the beast which lived, has the wound by the sword*, that is; hath the cicatrix or mark of the wound remaining after the cure; an argument of its being the work of an imperfect operator. This agrees with what was remarked page 268.

V. 15. *And it was given to him to give life to the image of the beast, and the image of the beast should speak: and should cause that whosoever will not adore the image of the beast should be slain.* The false prophet has further power, by the divine permission, to give apparent *life to the image* or statue of Antichrist, insomuch that it *shall speak*, or rather the devil in it, and deliver his oracles, which was often done in the ancient times of Paganism; and that the image *shall cause that, whosoever will not adore the image of the beast*, or Antichrist, *shall be slain*, that is, at the command of the devil speaking by the statue, those who refuse to adore it, will be put to death. This will be done in the persecution.

V. 16. *And he shall make all, both little and great, rich and poor, freemen and bondmen, to have a character in their right hand, or on their foreheads.* The same wicked minister of Antichrist will oblige people of all denominations, such will be the general apostacy, to let him imprint *a character* or particular mark *in their right hand or on their foreheads*, by which they will be distinguished as the votaries of Antichrist.

V. 17. *And that no man might buy or sell, but he that hath the character, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.* No one will be allowed to buy or sell any commodity, unless he shows the abovementioned mark, *or the name of the beast*, that is, the print upon himself of Antichrist's *name*, or of *the number of his name*. A similar severity was used in Dioclesian's persecution,

when it was forbid for any one to buy or sell in the public market, unless he first offered incense to an idol erected there for that purpose.

Thus will this *other beast*, or wicked minister of Antichrist, exert all his skill and power to enforce the execrable and absurd opinion of his master's divinity. Thus will he employ every diabolical art, both of persuasion and force, to prevail with his detestable enemy. And thus, as Tertullian says, "will the beast Anti-"christ with his false prophet, oppress the Church with "persecution." De Resur. Carnis, c. 25.

It was said above that no one would be allowed to buy or sell, unless he bore the mark of Antichrist, or his name, or *the number of his name*. His *name* then is something mysterious, as the letters of it will contain a particular number, which God in his bounty here gives as one characteristic among others, by which he may be known, and consequently rejected and abhorred. For thus proceeds St. John:

V. 18. *Here is wisdom. He that hath understanding, let him count the number of the beast. For it is the number of a man: and the number of him is six hundred sixty six.*

Here is wisdom, here it is proper to take notice. *He that has understanding*, he that has a share of skill and knowledge, *let him count the number of the beast*, which he may do, *for it is the number of a man*; that is, *it is the number* of the name *of a man*, conformably to what is said in the preceding verse. *And the number of him is six hundred sixty six*; the number therefore contained in Antichrist's name, will be 666. According to the account we have given of that impious man, he will be born a Mahometan prince, and will rise to the head of the Turkish empire. We may therefore be allowed to suppose him to bear the name of *Mahomet*, a name which so many emperors, his predecessors, will have borne before him, in honour of the first founder of the Mahometan religion and empire. This name expressed in the Greek language, because St. John wrote the Apocalypse in Greek, is MAOMETIΣ, or MOAMETIΣ, as Euthymius and the Greek historians, Zonoras and

denus, write it; and according to the Greek numeon, it stands thus:

M	40
A	1
O	70
M	40
E	5
T	300
I	10
Σ	200
	666

t may be here observed, how contrary to the sense scripture is the opinion of some moderns, who, in the it of opposition to the Catholic religion, assign for name of Antichrist, a generical term, containing, eed, the number 666, but not expressing a determi- man; and this indeterminate name they apply to iccession of many persons: whereas St. John plainays; *it is the number of a man, the number of his e;* it is therefore the number of the single name of articular man. And in like manner is Antichrist lently described by St Paul as an individual man. in what other sense, partiality apart, can the apostle understood, when he styles him, *the man of sin, the of perdition, the opposer, who sitteth as God in the ple of God; the wicked one, whom the Lord Jesus shall with the spirit of his mouth. &c.?* 2 Thess ii. The cription of him, which we have seen in Daniel, is ewise of the same tenour. The fathers of the urch join also in the same opinion, and are very cous in their account of his character. The whole se- we have hitherto given of his history, drawn from se sources, plainly points him out as one individual ng, an extraordinary man; and it will be further conned in the sequel. In fine, such has been the conit and unanimous tradition from the rise of Christity through all ages; as may be seen in the series of Scripture interpreters and ecclesiastical writers. y, even so universal and fixed has always been that

notion of Antichrist, that it may be put upon a level with the belief of the former existence of an Alexander or Julius Cæsar; nor can hardly be found now an individual in the common class of people and of the narrowest education, but knows in general the character of that enemy of Christ, and expects his coming in the last period of the world. This tradition is therefore traced up to the times of the apostles, and owes its existence to what they taught. St. Paul is an express voucher, that he had instructed the Thessalonians on that head. *Remember you not*, says he, *that when I was yet with you, I told you these things?* 2 Thess. ii. 5.

To return to the transactions of Antichrist. Finding himself so powerful by Satan's aid, and seconded by so able a minister, his false prophet; while on the other hand he sees the converted Jews and other Christians refusing him divine homage, and so fortified by the exhortations and miracles of their teachers, that all his pretended wonders and persuasive arts can make no impression upon them; he resolves by the instigation of Satan, to compel them by force into compliance, to show no mercy to the refractory, but to destroy them, and utterly abolish the Christian name. Full of self-conceit and rage, he is determined to suffer no rival in heaven or on earth, but that all mankind shall bow in homage to him, as God, and as the sole monarch of the whole world. This he designs to effect by the invincible force of his immense army, with which he purposes to carry ravage, devastation, and destruction, throughout every nation that resists him. Such are the hellish determinations he fixes; but before he commences the execution of them, Christ, the faithful governor of his Church, and supreme in his power, is pleased to give a special warning to his beloved servants, and for their support proclaims the following sentence:

Chap. xiii. v. 9. *If any man have an ear, let him hear:* let every one give attention.

V. 10. *He, that shall lead into captivity, shall go into captivity: he that shall kill by the sword, must be killed by the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.* That is, in the following persecution and war

of Antichrist, those that force others into captivity, shall themselves be made captives: and those that cruelly put others to death, shall undergo the same fate. Judgment is therefore already pronounced against Antichrist and his agents, that as they deal with others, they shall be dealt with themselves. Then it is added, *Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.* Here is the motive *of the patience and the faith of the saints*, or the servants of God, in this world. By *faith* they rely on the promises of God for the reward of their *patience*, and leave him to vindicate as he may judge fit, their cause, with respect to their persecutors. Such is the previous instruction Christ sends to his servants, before the dreadful day of persecution. But as the converted Jews are destined to stand foremost in the battle, and to be the first victims of Antichrist's fury, and must therefore set forth a glorious example of fortitude to the other Christians, they are provided with an extraordinary share of grace, and a peculiar degree of courage and constancy for their terrible conflict. For thus we hear this singular favour announced by St. John.

Chap. vii. v. 1. *After these things, I saw four Angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that they should not blow* upon the earth, nor upon the sea, nor on any tree.*

V. 2. *And I saw another Angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the sign of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four Angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,*

V. 3. *Saying: hurt not the earth, the sea, nor the trees, till we sign the servants of our God in their foreheads.*

Here are four angels, standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, which they are ready to let go, and which are to cause desolation over the whole globe. By the four winds of the earth, are meant the persecutions which are going to rise in every part of the earth, and which will form the

* In the Greek, *that a wind should not blow, &c.*

general persecution of Antichrist, as *the four winds* join to compose one general *wind*. But this persecution is withheld for a while by a divine command, which is carried by an angel *ascending from the East*, as coming from Him who *ascended above the Heaven of Heavens to the East*, Psalm lxvii. 34. The *wind* of persecution will *hurt the earth and the sea*, that is, will fall upon the Christian people, wherever they are, and *the trees*, or their pastors and clergy. But this alarming disaster is suspended, till the angel has marked *the servants of God in their forcheads with the sign of the living God*, that is, with the sign of the cross of Christ, who having died upon it, rose again to *life*. But who those servants of God are, we are told in the next verse.

V. 4. *And I heard the number of them that were signed; an hundred forty four thousand were signed, of every tribe of the children of Israel.* No sooner almost have the Jews tasted the comfort of having recovered the favour of their God by embracing Christianity, but behold! 144,000 of them are marked out and destined to be immolated to Christ by martyrdom, and are therefore *signed on the forehead* by the ministers of the Church with the sign of the cross, or confirmed in faith and fortitude, as the sacrament of confirmation is always conferred with making the sign of the cross on the forehead. Thus then this great number of converted Jews are prepared to grace Christianity by their triumph over torments and death. But as we learn from St. Paul, that *all Israel will be saved*, Rom. xi. 26, it is plain that, considering the vast body of the Jewish people, the number of martyrs here mentioned must fall much short of the number of converted Jews. The rest therefore will remain to reflect honour on the Christian religion, by their zeal in promoting it, and their exemplary lives. This select number of 144,000 champions, or twelve times twelve thousand, is made up by culling twelve thousand out of each tribe, as follows:

V. 5. *Of the tribe of Juda were twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Reuben, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Gad, twelve thousand signed.*

V. 6. *Of the tribe of Aser, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Nepthalia, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Manasses, twelve thousand signed.*

V. 7. *Of the tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Levi, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Issachar, twelve thousand signed.*

V. 8. *Of the tribe of Zabulon, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand signed.*

CHAPTER XI.

The Continuation of the History of the Sixth Age.

THE Almighty having prepared his faithful servants for the terrible conflict he proposes to subject them to, he announces the great persecution and terrible war, and exhibits the states of the Church at the time they begin, in the following manner:

Chap. xi. v. 1. *And there was given me*, says St. John, *a reed like unto a rod: and it was said to me*: arise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that adore therein.*

V. 2. *But the court, which is without the temple, cast out, and measure it not: because it is given unto the Gentiles* †, *and the holy city they shall tread under foot two and forty months.* The Churches consecrated to the true service of God, at this time, so far diminished in number, or so little filled, on account of the general apostacy and degeneracy of mankind, that all these Churches are here represented to St. John as reduced into one single Church or *temple*. The faithful ministers of God are also become so few, as to be represented as officiating at one altar in this Church; and all the good and zealous Christians make up so small a number, with respect to the whole bulk of mankind, that they are shown to St. John as collected in this one *temple*, paying their *adoration* to God. There is therefore given to St. John a *reed*, or a small slender measuring *rod*, as sufficient for the few inconsiderable measures he has to take, and he is told *to measure the temple of God,*

* In the Greek, *and the Angel stood, saying.*

† In the Greek, the punctuation stands thus; *and measure it not, because it is given unto the Gentiles, and the holy city,* &c,

and the altar, and them that adore therein, that the small size of both *temple* and *altar* may appear, and the little compass in which they are comprised, those who are there *adoring* God.

But for *the court which is without the temple*, that is, the great multitude of those who, for want of the spirit of religion, enter not the temple, but stand in *the court without the temple*, St. John is told *not to measure* them, but to *cast* them *out*, or to banish them from the neighbourhood of the temple, *because it*, the court, *is given to the Gentiles*, because God delivers this wicked multitude to be punished and destroyed by the Gentiles, that is, by Antichrist and his cruel and barbarous troops. The execution of this divine judgment commences very soon. For now Antichrist, mad with fury, declares war against the whole world, resolves to be sole master, to spare neither those that resist him, nor those who have given him any provocation, or against whom he has conceived an ill-will. Actuated by Satan, he feels no more sense of humanity, and breathes only blood and destruction. In this situation he is in some measure pictured by Nabuchodonosor, that haughty king of Assyria, who in the pride of his heart proclaimed *that his thoughts were to bring all the earth under his empire*, Judith ii. 3, and gave orders to the general of his armies: *Go out against all the kingdoms of the west, and against them especially that despised my commandment. Thy eye shall not spare any kingdom, and the strong cities thou shalt bring under my yoke.* Ibid. v. 5, 6. This war of Antichrist, the most bloody of all wars since the existence of the world, as in it are *killed the third part of men*, Apoc. ix. 15, will last three years and a half, as observed before from St. John: *and power was given him to do* two and forty months*, xiii. 5.

But furthermore, in our present text, it is added: *And the holy city they shall tread under foot two and forty months.* No sooner has the haughty monarch, Antichrist, declared war against mankind, but with the same breath he proclaims a general persecution, which he

* In the Greek, *to make war.*

himself intends to carry on, and dispatches his orders to have the same executed in every part of the earth. For it is now allowed to him and his bloody agents *to tread under foot the holy city*, that is, the whole body of the holy Christians, for *forty two months*, or three years and a half. This space of time Christ has set apart, to purify his Church, and to try his servants, and for that purpose allows them to fall under the power of this merciless tyrant: *And it was given unto him*, says St. John, *to make war with the Saints, and to overcome them*, Apoc. xiii. 7. We are admonished of the same by the prophet Daniel: *I beheld*, says he, *and lo that horn*, Antichrist, *made war against the Saints, and prevailed over them*, vii. 21. And again: *And he shall speak words against the most High, and shall crush the Saints of the most High.....And they shall be delivered into his hand until a time, and times, and half a time*, ibid. v. 25. The period of the persecution Daniel here expresses by *a time, and times, and half a time*, that is, a year, two years, and half a year, or three years and a half, the same with St. John.

Antichrist being at this time in Jerusalem, and implacably irritated against the Jews, who had deserted from him, looked upon him with abomination, and had espoused the Christian religion, which he hates, he resolves to begin his bloody persecution and massacre with them. He therefore sacrifices to his rage the abovementioned multitude of *an hundred forty four thousand*; but in what manner we are not told. On this striking catastrophe and deluge of blood, how justly may the body of converted Jews that remain, send up to heaven their lamentations and cries in those pathetic strains which their forefathers used, upon the destruction and havoc made by Nabuchodonosor, a figure of what Antichrist would one day do. *O God, the heathens are come into thy inheritance; they have defiled thy holy temple; they have made Jerusalem as a place to keep fruit.*

They have given the dead bodies of thy servants to be meat for the fowls of the air, the flesh of thy saints for the beasts of the earth.

They have poured out their blood as water, round about Jerusalem; and there was none to bury them. Psalm lxxviii.

Such a number of holy victims, doubtless, breathed forth from the earth the most fragrant odour, and were so acceptable to the heavenly court, that immediately St. John sees them in company with Christ, and their triumph celebrated.

Chap. xiv. v. 1. *And I beheld, and lo a Lamb stood upon mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty four thousand, having his name*, and the name of his Father written on their foreheads.*

Behold the *Lamb*, that is, Jesus Christ, standing surrounded with this numerous multitude upon *mount Sion*, perhaps the theatre of their martyrdom. They are distinguished to be the same body of people we saw before, prepared for the combat by the angel's imprinting *the sign of the living God on their foreheads*; as now, after their victory, they appear before the *Lamb* with *his name, and the name of his Father written on their foreheads*, to show that they have proved themselves faithful to the *sign* they had received, by giving testimony with their blood, both to the *Father* and to the *Lamb*. Perhaps also did they carry, before their martyrdom, some such inscription on their foreheads, in opposition to the mark of Antichrist.

V. 2. *And I heard a voice from heaven, as the noise of many waters, and as the voice of great thunder: and the voice which I heard†, was as the voice of harpers harping on their harps.*

V. 3. *And they sung as it were a new canticle, before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and the ancients; and no man could say‡ the canticle, but those hundred forty four thousand, who were purchased from the earth.*

Here are the heavenly choirs celebrating the tri-

* In the common Greek edition, *his name* is omitted, but it is found in many ancient manuscripts of great authority.

† In the Greek, *and I heard the voice of harpers*, &c.

‡ In the Greek, *could learn.*

umphs of these martyrs. In this exultation St. John hears a multitude of voices; *a voice* like that *of many waters*, that is, of the angels that preside over all the nations, denoted by *many waters*, according to Apoc. xvii. 15, from whence the Jews had been gathered together; *a voice* like that *of great thunder*, or of the angel that, according to chap. xiv. v. 18, presides over fire, which, as employed in military engines, by its explosion resembles *thunder;* and perhaps by such thundering fire were these champions of religion put to death. St. John also hears *the voice* of a number of *harpers*, singing a *new* hymn or *canticle*, which no one could learn or repeat but the 144,000 martyrs. This special privilege is owing to their peculiar character, as having been through former ages the chosen and beloved people of God, and now at last have also acknowledged Christ, the *Lamb*, for their Saviour and God, and laid down their lives the first for him. He by his own blood had *purchased them from the earth*, that is, had purchased for them these singular favours of conversion and martyrdom, for which purpose they have been collected from all parts of *the earth*. This melodious jubilation is performed *before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the ancients*, as a thanksgiving-homage to the Almighty; and a kind of congratulation to *the four* great prophets, Isaiah, Jeremy, Ezekiel, and Daniel, who had prophesied so much concerning the Jews; and to *the ancients*, or the patriarchs and other saints of the times preceding Christianity, who, from their former connexion with the Jews and the expected Messiah, are particularly interested in the present happy condition of the converted Jews.—St. John goes on:

V. 4. *These are they who were not defiled with women: for they are virgins. These follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were purchased from among men, the first fruits to God and the Lamb.*

These martyrs *were not defiled by women*, but *are virgins*, because they never yielded to adore, either the *dragon*, or the *beast*, Antichrist, or *his image*, as multitudes of others did, nor polluted themselves with any species of idolatry, which, in the Apocalypse and other

books of Scripture, is styled *fornication* or *prostitution*. They have therefore acquired a right to *follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth;* for he came into the world to destroy idolatry. They were likewise *purchased* by the blood of the Lamb, *from among men*, from among all the rest of mankind, to be the *first fruits to God and the Lamb*, that is, the first victims immolated *to God and the Lamb*, in Antichrist's persecution. Who is not sensible what a distinguished favour this will be to the Jews? that as they, in their ancestors, had renounced their Divine Messiah, and even put him to death, so upon their conversion, they shall redeem that enormous crime, by spilling the first of their blood for him.

V. 5. *And in their mouth was found no lie: for they are without spot before the throne of God.* They had practised no dissimulation, but openly professed the Christian religion in the presence of Antichrist with the utmost intrepidity, and rejoiced to lay down their lives for Him whom they had so long blindly disowned to be their Saviour. By this complete sacrifice of themselves, they washed off all guilt, and therefore stand *without spot before the throne of God.*

The prophet Sophonias seemed to announce in a far distant age this future auspicious sacrifice of the converted Jews, and the general admiration it would raise through the world. *I will get them*, the Jews, *praise, saith the Lord, and a name, in all the land, where they had been put to confusion; at that time, when I will bring you, and at the time that I will gather you. For I will give you a name, and praise among all people of the earth, when I shall have brought back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord.* Sophon. iii. 19, 20.

Thus then the Jews, become zealous Christians, will signalize their fortitude in a peculiar manner, and will be distinguished by the glorious mark of being the first victims of martyrdom offered to our Saviour in the persecution of Antichrist; in the same manner as the innocent children of their forefathers, put to death by Herod, were the first sacrifice made to Christ, after he came into the world. And as those innocents were truly *virgins* in a natural sense, so will the converted

Jews be *virgins* in the prophetic meaning, of not being *defiled* by any kind of idolatrous prostitution.—Thus again we see, that as St. Stephen, a converted Jew, was the first martyr among the new formed Christians, so will the converted Jews, in the last period of the world, and in the last persecution, appear conspicuous by walking foremost in rank with the palm of martyrdom.

Antichrist having performed the above-recited bloody execution at Jerusalem, prepares next to march his army *of two hundred million horsemen*, Apoc. ix. 16, with design to lay waste the whole earth, and to extirpate the Christians. But as the Almighty, even in the height of his anger, remembers mercy, he bountifully forewarns mankind of the scourge he is going to let loose upon them, in order to give them still an opportunity of preventing it by their conversion to him. Thus he proclaims the impending scourge by his prophet Sophonias.

Chap. i. v. 14. *The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and exceeding swift: the voice of the day of the Lord is bitter, the mighty man shall there meet with tribulation.*

V. 15. *That day is a day of wrath, a day of tribulation and distress, a day of calamity and misery, a day of darkness and obscurity, a day of clouds and whirlwinds:*

V. 16. *A day of trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high bulwarks.*

V. 17. *And I will distress men, and they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord: and their blood shall be poured out as earth, and their bodies as dung*

V. 18. *Neither shall their silver and their gold be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord: all the land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy, for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.*

Then the Almighty exhorts them to avert his anger by having recourse to his mercy.

Chap. ii. v. 1. *Assemble yourselves together, be gathered together*, to implore mercy, *O nation not worthy to be loved.*

V. 2. *Before the decree bring forth the day as dust passing away, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's indignation come upon you.*

And if this was not a sufficient proof of God's merciful disposition, he is pleased to send a second pathetic warning of his approaching armies by his prophet Joel.

Chap. ii. v. 10. *At their presence the earth has trembled, the heavens are moved; the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars have withdrawn their shining.*

V. 11. *And the Lord has uttered his voice before the face of his army: for his armies are exceeding great, for they are strong, and execute his word: For the day of the Lord is very great and very terrible: and who can stand it?*

Here are several of those signs, which our Saviour forewarns us shall happen in the last period of the world. These mentioned here are sent as forerunners, announcing the coming of the destructive army of Antichrist. At its appearance *the earth has trembled,* says Joel; or, as our Saviour says, *there shall be great earthquakes,* Luke xxi. 11. *The Heavens are moved:* Christ says, *the powers of Heaven shall be moved,* Matth. xxiv. 29. *The sun and moon are darkened,* continues Joel, *and the stars have withdrawn their shining;* and Christ, *the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from Heaven,* Matt. xxiv. 29. This is the *voice the Lord has uttered before the face of his army,* to strike terror into mankind, and bring them to themselves. For *his army are exceeding great,* said Joel, *they are strong, and execute his word: For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible: and who can stand it?*——Again the Almighty throws in another energetic exhortation to penance, desirous that the scourge may be taken out of his hand before he strikes:

V. 12. *Now therefore, saith the Lord,* continues Joel, *be converted to me with all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning.*

V. 13. *And rend your hearts, and not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, patient and rich in mercy, and ready to repent of the evil.*

V. 14. *Who knows but he will return, and forgive, and leave a blessing behind, sacrifice and libation to the Lord your God?*

V. 15. *Blow the trumpet in Sion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly.*

V. 16. *Gather together the people, sanctify the Church, assemble the ancients, gather together the little ones, and them that suck at the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth from his bed, and the bride out of her bride-chamber.*

V. 17. *Between the porch and the altar the priests the Lord's ministers shall weep, and shall say: spare, O Lord, spare thy people: and give not thy inheritance to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them. Why should they say among the nations, where is their God?*

These Divine admonitions not prevailing with mankind, who have hardened themselves in iniquity, and carried it to a greater pitch than was ever seen in any former period of the world, the Almighty in his wrath lets loose the reins to Antichrist. This devouring *beast* and raging tyrant sets out with his army to ravage and desolate, first, the country of Judæa, then all Christendom, and, in fine, to trample under foot all the powers of the earth. The march and progress of this horrible army, with the havoc it makes, is described in most pathetic and lofty strains by the prophet Joel. The description indeed is applied by some commentators to a vast swarm of devouring insects, by others to the Chaldean troops coming against Jerusalem under Nabuchodonosor; but whoever will attentively view the particulars of the narrative, will see that they do not tally with either of those cases, but agree very properly with the army of the Apocalypse.——Thus cries out Joel,

Chap. i. v. 2. *Hear this, ye old men, and give ear all ye inhabitants of the land: did this ever happen in your days, or in the days of your fathers?*

V. 3. *Tell ye of this to your children, and let your children tell their children, and their children to another generation.*

V. 4. *That which the palmer-worm has left, the locust*

has eaten; and that which the locust has left, the Bruchus has eaten; and that which the Bruchus has left, the mildew has destroyed* (has eaten).

V. 5. *Awake ye, that are drunk, and weep, and mourn all ye, that take delight in drinking sweet wine; for it is cut off from your mouth.*

V. 6. *For a nation has come up upon my land, strong and without number; his teeth are like the teeth of a lion: and his cheek-teeth, as of a lion's whelp.*

V. 7. *He has laid my vineyard waste, and has pulled off the bark of my fig-tree: he has stripped it bare, and cast it away: the branches thereof are made white.*

The four insects, palmer-worm, locust, bruchus, and grasshopper, ver. 4, represent the four great nations, which we saw crossing the Euphrates, to form Antichrist's army. As they march at present in four separate bodies, it is said that what one *leaves*, the other *eats up*, to show that they leave famine behind them, wherever they go.

They are *strong and without number*, ver. 6, and as furious *lions*, they root up all the vineyards and fruit-trees, ver. 7, after having devoured the fruit.——Joel goes on,

V. 8. *Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth.*

V. 9. *Sacrifice and libation is cut off from the house of the Lord; the priests, the Lord's ministers, have mourned.*

V. 10. *The country is destroyed, the ground hath mourned: for the corn is wasted, the wine is confounded, the oil hath languished.*

V. 11. *The husbandmen are ashamed, the vine-dressers have howled for the wheat and for the barley, because the harvest of the field is perished.*

V. 12. *The vineyard is confounded, and the fig-tree hath languished: the pomegranate-tree, and the palm-tree, and the apple-tree, and all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withdrawn from the children of men.*

* Most interpreters understand the Hebrew word, here rendered by *mildew*, to mean a species of grasshopper or other insect.

V. 17. *The beasts have rotted in their dung; the barns are destroyed, the storehouses are broken down: because the corn is confounded.*

V. 18. *Why did the beasts groan, why did the herds of cattle low? because there is no pasture for them: yea, and the flocks of sheep are perished.*

Here then the corn, wine, oil, and fruit, are all swept away by these rapacious wolves, and such universal devastation and desolation overspread the land, that the people are reduced to lamentation, famine, and despair, ver. 8: the priests have not even bread and wine sufficient for the holy sacrifice, ver. 9, and the beasts of the field perish for want of food, ver. 17, 18.——Joel continues,

Chap. ii. v. 1. *Blow ye the trumpet in Sion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain, let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: because the day of the Lord cometh, because it is nigh at hand.*

V. 2. *A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and whirlwinds: a numerous and strong people, as the morning spread upon the mountains: the like to it hath not been from the beginning, nor shall be after it, even to the years of generation and generation.*

V. 3. *Before the face thereof a devouring fire, and behind it a burning flame: the land is like a garden of pleasure before it, and behind it a desolate wilderness, neither is there any one that can escape it.*

At the approach of this tremendous army, the alarm is sounded, ver. 1, 2, to give notice that *the day of the Lord cometh, the day of darkness is nigh at hand*, that is, the terrible day of the wrath of God, who is now going to pour out his judgments upon mankind in a more severe manner than ever before. *A numerous and strong people* comes, ver. 2, a prodigious army appears, *the like to it has not been from the beginning, nor shall be after it, even to the years of generation and generation*, which shows it to be the army of Antichrist, the most numerous that has been or will be, consisting, according to St. John, of *two hundred million*, Apoc. ix. 16. It overspreads the land with a swiftness like to that of the aurora or *morning* light *expanding* itself over the

tops of the mountains, ver. 2. This is done by means of incorporated devils, that make part of this army, as we have before observed. *Before the face thereof* proceeds a *burning fire*, ver. 3, the fire of gunpowder, with which they destroy mankind; and *behind it a devouring flame*, arising from their setting fire to every thing as they march, and thus reducing the whole country into a desert, or, as the prophet beautifully expresses it, *the land is like a garden of pleasure before it, and behind it a desolate wilderness.*

V. 4. *The appearance of them*, continues Joel, *is as the appearance of horses, and they shall run like horsemen.*

V. 5. *They shall leap like the noise of chariots upon the tops of mountains, like the noise of a flame of fire devouring the stubble, as a strong people prepared to battle.*

V. 6. *At their presence the people shall be in grievous pain: all faces shall be made like a kettle.*

The picture here drawn of the army is similar to that we saw from the hand of St. John. Joel does not say the army consists wholly of cavalry, but *the appearance of them is as the appearance of horses*, ver. 4, including the artillery or cannon under *the appearance of horses*, in the same manner as St. John saw them, (see page 261.) The carriages of the cannon, as they are drawn up the mountains, make a noise *like the noise of chariots*, ver. 5, and a crackling like that *of a flame of fire devouring stubble*, as they are dragged over the stones and rocks. These carriages are moreover said to *leap up upon the tops of the mountains*, by the celerity with which the hellish spirits move them forwards. Consternation, terror, and despair, are the vanguard of such an army, *all faces* shall turn black *like a kettle* with fear and dread, ver. 6.

V. 7. *They shall run like valiant men*, continues Joel, *like men of war they shall scale the wall: the men shall march every one on his way, and they shall not turn aside from their ranks.*

V. 8. *No one shall press upon his brother: they shall walk every one in his path: yea, and they shall fall through the windows, and shall take no harm.*

V. 9. *They shall enter into the city: they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up the houses, they shall come in at the windows as a thief.*

Here is the last part of the description of this strange army. Their intrepidity is unparalleled. They *run* upon danger, or *scale the walls* of fortified towns, without the least concern, ver. 7; and in their march they keep their ranks without *pressing* one another, *every one walking* in security *in his path* without the least fear of enemies, ver. 7, 8. Their agility is such, that *they come in at the windows as a thief*, and if they *fall through them, they take no harm*, ver. 8, 9. They insinuate themselves *into towns*, though the gates be shut; they *run upon the walls*, as upon plain ground; they get upon the tops of houses, as if they had wings. It is plain, such actions are not human actions, and consequently the agents are not men, but infernal spirits, as we have so often remarked. At the head then of such troops, the furious tyrant and general enemy of mankind, Antichrist, carries ravage and desolation through the land, burns the cities, reduces the strongest fortresses without difficulty, and levels them to the ground. He will seem to imitate the proud and haughty king of Assyria, Nabuchodonosor, who may be well deemed a figure of him. That monarch said to his general Holofernes: *go out against all the kingdoms of the west, and against them especially that despise my commandment. Thy eye shall not spare any kingdom, and all the strong cities thou shalt bring under my yoke.* Judith ii. 5, 6. In consequence of these orders, Holofernes *went forth, he and all the army, with the chariots, and horsemen, and archers, who covered the face of the earth, like locusts.—He came to the great mountains of Ange, which are on the left of Cilicia: and he went up to all their castles, and took all the strong places.—And he passed over the Euphrates, and came into Mesopotamia; and he forced all the stately cities that were there.—And he carried away all the children of Madian, and stripped them of all their riches, and all that resisted him he slew with the edge of the sword. And after these things he went down into the plains of Damascus in the days of the*

harvest, and he set all the corn on fire, and he caused all the trees and vineyards to be cut down. Judith ii. v. 11, &c. And though the inhabitants of the cities went out to meet him and make their submission, *they could not for all that mitigate the fierceness of his heart: for he both destroyed their cities, and cut down their groves. For Nabuchodonosor the king had commanded him to destroy all the gods of the earth, that he only might be called God by those nations, which could be brought under him by the power of Holofernes.* Judith iii. 11, 12, 13. Here is an imperfect picture of the proceedings of Antichrist, who, according to the accounts above given of Joel and St. John, will far surpass in rage and barbarity Holofernes or his master Nabuchodonosor. Antichrist will have a more powerful and pernicious instrument in hand, namely, gunpowder, which he will make so much use of, according to St. John, as *to kill the third part of men* by it, Apoc. ix. 18. And all obstacles seem to vanish before him, as being easily removed or surmounted by the devils that attend him: for *the dragon*, Satan, *gave him his own strength*, or his own armies, Apoc. xiii. 2. All this is permitted by Almighty God, in his wrath, for the execution of his judgments, as he formerly permitted the northern barbarous nations in like manner to assist Rome for a while with her armies. *For God hath given into their hearts*, said St. John, *to do that which pleaseth him: that they give their kingdom to the beast till the words of God be fulfilled*, Apoc. xvii. 17. The iniquities of mankind having filled up their measure at this period, Antichrist is the rod of punishment in the hand of God; who therefore allows him an extraordinary destructive power, such as had never been permitted to fall into the hands of any mortal before. *And power was given him*, says St. John, *over every tribe, and people, and tongue, and nation*, Apoc. xiii. 7. Thus then the *beast* becomes irresistible, and with *the feet of a bear* and *the mouth of a lion*, as St. John says, Apoc. xiii. 2, or with *claws and teeth of iron*, according to Daniel, vii. 19, *the beast devours the whole earth, treads it down, and breaks it in pieces*, Dan. vii. 23. Thus we see how fully he answers the

character given him in the fourth Seal. *Behold a pale horse*, says St. John, *and he that sat on him, his name was death, and hell followed him. And power was given to him over the four parts of the earth, to kill with sword, with famine, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth*, Apoc. vi. 8. And thus he becomes universal monarch *.

Both the ancients and moderns speak of Antichrist as domineering over the whole world. Lactantius says, "he will torment the world with an insupportable ty-"ranny," Inst. l. 7. c. 16. Sulpitius Severus tells us he had heard from St. Martin, that "the whole earth and "all mankind will be reduced under the power of Anti-"christ," Dial. 2. de vitâ St. Mart. St. Jerome says that "Antichrist will reign over the whole world," in Dan. xi. St. Austin and St. Hyppolytus Martyr hold the same sentiment.

Among the moderns, Bellarmine, Cornelius a Lapide, and others, speak the same language.

Several of the preceding articles relating to the character and actions of Antichrist, being also intimated to us with other particulars in a passage of the prophet Daniel, which has been applied to Antichrist by St. Jerome, Theodoret, and other ancient and modern interpreters, we shall here give it.

Chap. xi. v. 36. *The king*, says Daniel, *shall do according to his will, and he shall be lifted up, and shall magnify himself against every God: and he shall speak great things against the God of Gods, and shall prosper, till the wrath be accomplished. For the determination is made.* Here is Antichrist's power of *doing according to his will*; here is his arrogance, his luciferian pride, his rebellion and his blasphemies against the Almighty, just as St. John and St. Paul have described them. And it is added that he *shall prosper, till the wrath be accomplished*, that

* If the prince of darkness be allowed an insight into futurity by means of the prophecies, he may have suggested to the Turkish monarchs the prophetic motto, which they inscribe upon their military standard, *Donec totum impleat Orbem*, *till it fills the whole Earth*.

is, till the Almighty has executed, by him, his judgments upon mankind for their wickedness. For the *determination is made;* for such is the decree of Heaven.

V. 37. *And he shall make no account of the God of his fathers,* continues Daniel, *and he shall follow the lust of women, and he shall not regard any Gods: for he shall rise up against all things.* Antichrist is here represented as an atheist, and addicted to lust.——Daniel proceeds,

V. 38. *But he shall worship the god Maozim in his place: and a God whom his fathers knew not he shall worship with gold and silver, and precious stones, and things of great price.* Antichrist, though he was said before *not to regard any gods,* yet he *worships in his place,* or privately, *the god Maozim,* that is, *the god of fortresses;* for so the word *Maozim* is translated by Theodotion and Aquila, by the authors of the Syriac and Arabic versions, and by Vatable and others. It would seem that Antichrist, on his astonishing success in reducing the strong holds and fortified places, beyond that of any conqueror the world ever saw, will acknowledge it, but not publicly, to be owing to the aid and operation of Satan who attends him, and whom on that account he will privately *worship with gold and silver and precious stones,* &c. under the name of *the god of fortresses.* That such will be his success over fortresses, we have seen in the prophecy of Joel.——Lastly,

V. 39. *And he shall do this to fortify Maozim with a strange god, whom he hath acknowledged, and he shall increase glory, and shall give them power over many, and shall divide them the land for nothing.* He will *fortify* his good Maozim *with a strange god, whom he hath acknowledged,* that is, with another infernal spirit, from whom he *acknowledges* to have received particular assistance; probably that spirit, which attends his false prophet and enables him to perform such extraordinary feats and wonders for promoting Antichrist's credit and the worship paid to him. *And he shall increase glory, and shall give them power over many, and shall divide them the land for nothing.* Here the Antichristian monarch distributes his favours to his partisans. To some he gives *glory,*

that is, title and pre-eminence; to others he confers *power over many*, that is, kingdoms, or governments of provinces, towns, &c. and to others *he divides the land for nothing*, giving them large possessions or estates gratis. Thus, in quality of universal monarch, he disposes of the earth, of dignities and riches, at his pleasure.——As a prelude to this future power of Antichrist, may not the devil have suggested to the Turkish emperors the title, which they now assume by anticipation, of "bestowers of all earthly crowns?"——See note, p. 271.

But now we must return to consider, that such is the general and dreadful calamity of the times we are describing, that, while Antichrist spreads abroad a flood of desolation and slaughter by his army, and thus becomes the instrument of punishment to the wicked, he is to be understood to exercise at the same time a most sanguinary persecution against the servants of God. He had begun it with putting to death 144,000 converted Jews. But now the *four winds* are let loose, which we saw held by the angels, Apoc. vii. 1, and they carry with their innate velocity the rage of persecution into every corner of the globe. Hell and earth combine; the devil, Antichrist, and the false prophet, confederate together to extirpate Christianity. They set all engines at work, to abolish all worship of God, and to establish Idolatry. St. Austin, speaking of this dreadful period, says: "This persecution will be the last, it will happen "towards the approach of the last judgment, and it will "fall upon the church in every part of the world; that "is, the whole city of Christ will be persecuted by the "whole city of the devil, as far as both are extended "upon the earth." De Civ. lib. 20. c. 11. The barbarous tortures, employed in the primitive persecutions, are revived and new ones more cruel invented. The racks, torches, gridirons, fire, and other instruments of torment, are reproduced The Christians are dragged before the statue of Antichrist, which if they refuse to *adore*, certain death is their punishment, Apoc. xiii. 15. We are shocked in reading the account of the barbarities used by Nero, Domitian, Dioclesian, &c. against the

Christians, but these will be much exceeded by the cruelties of this last persecution. Some of those Roman emperors, for their inexpressible violences against religion, were thought by a part of the Christians to be Antichrist; but in the time we are speaking of, the Christians will experience the rage of the real Antichrist, to which nothing in the preceding ages will have been found equal. He is permitted *to make war with the saints, and to overcome them*, as St. John informs us, Apoc. xiii. 7. He is now in his full career of power, and *crushes the saints of the most high*, as Daniel forewarned us, vii. 25. This ferocious monster, as in his war he seemed to imitate the cruel tyrant Nabuchodonosor; so in his hatred to religion he resembles the impious Syrian king, Antiochus Epiphanes, who by the Christian writers has been always marked out as the figure of him. That prince was an avowed enemy to the worship of God, and exercised a most horrible persecution upon the Jews, insomuch that, having taken the city of Jerusalem by force of arms, *he commanded the soldiers to kill, and not to spare any that come in their way, and to go up into the houses to slay.*

Thus there was a slaughter of young and old, a destruction of women and children, and killing of virgins and infants.

And there were slain in the space of three whole days fourscore thousand, forty thousand were made prisoners, and as many sold.——

And when Antiochus had taken away out of the Temple a thousand and eight hundred talents, he went back in all haste to Antioch, thinking through pride, that he might now make the land navigable and the sea passable on foot: such was the haughtiness of his mind, 2 *Mach.* v.

Antiochus, though retired out of the country, did not abate in his enmity to the Jews. For he sent Apollonius with an army of twenty-two thousand men, who made another dreadful slaughter of the people in Jerusalem. And,

Not long after, continues the sacred writer, *the king sent a certain old man of Antioch, to compel the Jews to depart from the laws of their fathers and of God: And*

to defile the temple that was in Jerusalem, and to call it the temple of Jupiter Olympius.——

And there went out a decree——*to oblige them to sacrifice*, to the idol of Jupiter Olympius, and *whosoever would not conform themselves to the ways of the heathens should be put to death*, 2 Mach. vi. Let these actions of Antiochus against the Jews be looked upon as a faint draught of those violences which Antichrist will exercise upon the Christians.

But on account of the weakness of human nature, and to moderate our terror at the sight of such an unexampled persecution, our Saviour himself has also been pleased to give us previous notice of it. *For there shall be then great tribulation*, says he, *such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, neither shall be. And unless those days had been shortened, no flesh should be saved: for the sake of the elect those days shall be shortened*, Matth. xxiv. 21, 22. Happily, amidst this frightful prospect, there shines a ray of comfort. These extreme difficulties and rigorous trials, this war and slaughter, which, if continued, would sweep away the whole race of mankind, our Saviour informs us, shall be *shortened*, that is, contracted to the compass of three years and a half, *for the sake of the elect*, or, out of regard for his faithful and beloved servants; in the same manner as formerly Almighty God offered to spare the wicked city of Sodom, in case ten just men could be found in it. When mankind are brought to so severe a test, what wonder if, in an age of corruption, infidelity, and irreligion, numbers give up their faith in Christ, and go over to his enemy, the *beast*, and adore him as a God? And such, we learn from St. John, will be unhappily the case. *And all that dwell upon the earth, adored him, whose names are not written in the book of life*, Apoc. xiii. 8.

But besides what we have seen concerning this persecution, as the Almighty has judged extraordinary admonitions necessary for us in proportion to the rigour of the trial, he has vouchsafed to impart to us a further account of it by his prophet Daniel, chap. xii. ver. 1. *At that time*, says this prophet, *shall Michael rise up*,

the great prince, who standeth for the children of thy people: and a time shall come such as never was from the time that nations began even until that time. And at that time shall thy people be saved, every one that shall be found written in the book. Here the angel tells Daniel, that at the time of the terrible persecution of Antichrist, the archangel Michael, who is the patron of the Christian Church, as he was of the Jewish, will *rise up* to the succour of the Christians, and fight against the powers of hell for them, in the same manner as we saw he did in the first persecutions under the Roman emperors, Apoc. xii. 7; that the persecution will also be *such as never was from the time that nations began even until that time;* and that those only shall *be saved, who shall be found written in the book* of life, as St. John has just told us; which indicates, that few will stand the trial and gain the crown of martyrdom, in comparison to the number of those who will give up the cause.——Then Daniel asked,

V. 6. *How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?*

V. 7. *And I heard,* says he, *the man that was clothed in linen, that stood upon the waters of the river, when he had lifted up his right hand, and his left hand to Heaven, and had sworn by him who liveth for ever, that it should be unto a time, and times, and half a time.*

Here then the answer is given in the most solemn manner, and God called to witness, (which shows the importance of the thing,) that this dreadful period will last, for *a time, and times, and half a time,* or three years and a half. That by the expression of *a time,* the prophet means a year, appears from another passage, where the same prophet speaking of the sentence the Almighty had passed upon Nabuchodonosor, he says: *They shall cast thee out from among men, and thy dwelling shall be with cattle and with wild beasts, and thou shalt eat grass as an ox, and shall be wet with the dew of heaven: and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth over the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will,* Dan. iv. 22. The *seven times* here fixed for the duration of that proud king's punishment, are acknowledg-

appears Antichrist's persecution according to the preceding account, we should not however be dejected or dismayed. Confidence in the mercies and providence of God should allay our fears and support our fortitude. That all-bountifull being, in his severest judgments, never forgets mercy; and when he sends trials, he furnishes assistance proportioned to the exigencies. We have already seen that the Archangel Michael will come, by the order of God, to the defence of the Christians, and will check the exorbitant power of Satan. Besides we are assured that boisterous storm will not last beyond three years and a half. But the principal support in these extreme distresses will be, the abundant graces infused by the Almighty into the hearts of the faithful, which will inspire them with the most heroic fortitude and invincible constancy. These dispositions will also be nourished and animated by the incessant preaching of the ministers of God, who will be enabled to enforce their exhortations with many shining miracles. Among these Apostolic labourers, Henoch and Elias will signalize their zeal. By such means, not only the faithful will be supported, but many conversions made. The church therefore at this period, though in appearance so much oppressed, will shine more glorious than in any former age, by the number of Christian champions, who will not fear to make open profession of their faith, will baffle by their invincible fortitude all Antichrist's arts and torments, and will soar in triumph to heaven with the crown of martyrdom.

It would seem that, as the Christians will be fully instructed in the prophecies relating to the time, some of them perhaps under their torments, will admonish Antichrist of his impending fate; in a similar manner as the abovementioned king Antiochus was forewarned, by three of the seven Machabees whom he put to death, of the Divine vengeance that would soon overtake him. The fifth of them, in his tortures, said to Antiochus: *Whereas thou hast power among men, though thou art corruptible, thou dost what thou wilt: but think not that our nation is forsaken by God. But stay patiently awhile, and thou shalt see his great power, in what manner he*

will torment thee, and thy seed. 2 Mach. vii. 16, 17. Antichrist raging with fury at hearing from the expiring Christians the supreme decree, which dooms him with all his men to be slain by Jesus Christ and his celestial army of saints, he resolves upon the most daring and most impious scheme that ever entered the heart of man, and which, by the concurrence of Satan and his false prophet, he puts in execution.

Chap. xvi. v. 13. *And I saw,* says St. John, *from the mouth of the dragon, and from the mouth of the beast, and from the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs.*

V. 14. *For they are the spirits of devils working signs, and they go forth unto the kings of the whole earth* * *to gather them to battle against the great day of the Almighty God.* The *dragon* or Satan, the *beast* or Antichrist, and the *false prophet*, send forth, each of them, an *unclean spirit* or devil. These they depute to all the kings and potentates, to all the great and little states of the earth, *to gather them to battle against the great day of the Almighty God*, that is, to engage them to assemble their troops and join Antichrist, who has determined to encounter with the Omnipotent God, by whom they will on that *great day* be crushed and utterly destroyed. What audacious temerity, surely, the advice of Satan, to dare challenge the Almighty to battle! But what wonder that those proud angels who had rebelled against their God in heaven, should now excite mankind to a similar impiety? These three ambassadors, *spirits of devils*, conceal themselves under human shapes, and *like frogs*, which are amphibious, proceed both by land and sea to every state on the continents and in the islands, and by their power of *working signs* or wonders impose upon the princes, and prevail with them to embark in the mad design of their great master, Antichrist.

The earth was now reeking every where with the blood of Christian victims. The persecution raged

* In the Greek, *the kings of the earth and of the whole inhabited world.*

with the utmost violence, and daily swept away multitudes. The pastors especially are picked out for slaughter, being more obnoxious on account of their zeal, in opposing Antichrist, in animating the Christians, and fortifying them under their conflicts. And this is exhibited to us with strong colours by the prophet Jeremy: *Howl, ye shepherds*, says he, *and cry: and sprinkle yourselves with ashes, ye leaders of the flock: for the days of your slaughter and dispersion are accomplished, and you shall fall like precious vessels. And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the leaders of the flock to save themselves*, xxv. 34, 35. But this persecution was to be distinguished in a particular manner by the martyrdom of the two great messengers of Christ, his *two witnesses*, Henoch and Elias. Their Saviour and master had assigned them 1260 *days*, or three years and a half, to *prophesy*, or to perform the function of his special ministers; during which time he screened them from all attempts of Antichrist and other enemies. But that period being now elapsed, he withdraws that special protection from them, and requires that they shall finish their work by sealing it with their blood. He therefore delivers them over into the power of Antichrist.

Chap. xi. v. 7. *And when they*, the two witnesses, *shall have finished their testimony*, says St. John, *the beast, that ascendeth out of the abyss, shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.* Henoch and Elias then having finished *their testimony*, or time appointed them to give testimony to Christ by their preaching, they are put to death by order of Antichrist, who is impelled to it by Satan, *the beast that ascendeth out of the abyss* or bottomless pit.

V. 8. *And their bodies shall lie in the streets of the great city, which is called spiritually Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord also was crucified.* Their dead bodies lie exposed in the streets of *the great city*, which is Jerusalem, as appears by what is added, *where their Lord was crucified*; and our Saviour had said: *it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem*, Luke xiii. 33. Jerusalem is styled *spiritually* or mystically *Sodom* and

Egypt: Sodom, because, as that city was burned by fire from Heaven for its iniquities, so was Jerusalem doomed by Heaven to be burned by the Romans, in consequence of its *crucifying its Lord.* Jerusalem is also styled *Egypt*, in allusion to the persecution the Jews suffered under the Pharaohs in Egypt, and which they will suffer in a more severe manner at Jerusalem under Antichrist.

V. 9. *And they of the tribes, and peoples, and tongues, and nations, shall see their bodies for three days and a half: and they shall not suffer their bodies to be laid in sepulchres.*

V. 10. *And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry: and shall send gifts one to another, because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt upon the earth.* For three days and a half the bodies of Henoch and Elias will remain exposed to the sight of an infinite multitude of people from all nations of the earth, who will be then in Jerusalem: nor will they suffer the bodies to be buried, for the hatred they will have conceived to the two holy prophets. Those that *dwell on the earth*, or the bad sort of people, will every where *rejoice* at their death, and will send presents to congratulate one another on being freed from such importunate preachers, and from the dreadful effects of their miraculous powers. But,

V. 11. *And after three days and a half*, continues St. John, *the spirit of life from God entered into them. And they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them that saw them.*

V. 12. *And they heard a great voice from Heaven, saying to them: come up hither. And they went up to Heaven in a cloud; and their enemies saw them.* Here we see the Almighty hand raising the two dead heroes to life; and they are called to the reward of their labours, a happy immortality; their enemies seeing them with astonishment mount into Heaven. In fine,

V. 13. *And at that hour there was made a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell: and there were slain in the earthquakes names of men seven thousand: and the rest were cast into a fear, and gave glory*

to the God of Heaven. At the time that the two resuscitated martyrs will ascend to Heaven, an *earthquake* will happen, which will throw down *a tenth part of the city* of Jerusalem, and destroy *seven thousand* of Antichrist's adherents, who deserve no more than the mere *name of men.* But those that remain will be struck with terror, will acknowledge the hand of the Almighty in this dreadful event, and deserting the wicked party, will be converted to God. Such will be the glorious triumph of Henoch and Elias. It will happen some time before the close of the persecution; because the period of their ministry is the same in length with that of the persecution, viz. three years and a half, and they had employed some share of their time in converting the Jews before the persecution commenced.

Whether some nations of Africa will revolt from the dominion of the Antichristian tyrant, or whatever else will be the provocation, it seems that he will himself also carry his arms into that country. This appears from a passage of the prophet Daniel, which St. Jerome and some other ancient interpreters have so understood.

Chap. xi. v. 40. *And at the time prefixed,* says Daniel, *the king of the south,* the king of Egypt, *shall fight against him, and the king of the north,* Antichrist, *shall come against him like a tempest, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with a great navy, and he shall enter into the countries, and shall destroy, and pass through.*

V. 41. *And he shall enter into the glorious land, and many shall fall: and these only shall be saved out of his hand, Edom and Moab, and the principality of the children of Ammon.*

V. 42. *And he shall lay his hand upon the lands: and the land of Egypt shall not escape.*

V. 43. *And he shall have power over the treasures of gold, and of silver, and all the precious things of Egypt: and he shall pass through Lybia and Ethiopia.* During these exploits,

V. 44. *And tidings out of the east, and out of the north, shall trouble him: and he shall come with a great multitude to destroy and slay many.* Antichrist will be alarmed with

tidings out of the east and out of the north, probably of nations revolting against him, as this sixth age is full of such confusion, according to that of our Saviour: *Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom*, Matt. xxiv. 7. The exasperated tyrant will therefore leave Africa, and proceed with his prodigious army into Asia, the provinces of which lie to the *east* and *north* of Egypt, and there he will *destroy and slay many*. He is yet in the full gale of prosperity, and therefore will bear down all before him. Among his present Asiatic expeditions, it seems he will vent his rage a second time against Jerusalem. Provoked, perhaps, that such a number of his partisans had perished in the earthquake which happened at the triumph of Henoch and Elias, and that the rest had deserted him to become the servants of God, he * will lay siege to Jerusalem and take it, as we learn from the prophet Zachary.

Chap. xiv. v. 1. *Behold the days of the Lord shall come, and thy spoils shall be divided in the midst of thee.*

V. 2. *And I will gather all nations to Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken, and the houses shall be rifled, and the women shall be defiled: and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the rest of the people shall not be taken away out of the city.* On this occasion the prophet informs us that some Jews will be found in Antichrist's army; for he says, ver. 14, *And even Juda shall fight against Jerusalem.*

Antichrist thus goes on, regaling himself with the destruction and havoc he makes every where, and drenching himself with the blood of martyrs. But, notwithstanding all the miseries of war, famine, pestilence, &c. that at this period like a torrent have poured in upon mankind, notwithstanding the unparalleled tyranny of the furious *beast*, notwithstanding that these excessive calamities are known to proceed from the avenging justice of an angry God; still who would believe it! the wicked remain incorrigible, and those that have basely sunk into the abomination of idolatry, take not warning to re-

* Or one of his generals.

trieve themselves, but continue hardened in their iniquity. For thus speaks St. John,

Chap. ix. v 20. *And the rest of the men, who were not slain by these plagues, did not do penance from the works of their hands, that they should not adore devils, and idols of gold and silver, and brass, and stone, and wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.*

V. 21. *Neither did they penance from their murders, nor from their sorceries, nor from their fornication, nor from their thefts.*

Antichrist having, by the strength of his armies and by the assistance of the infernal associates, borne down all opposition, we may now view him raised up to the pinnacle of human glory, to the summit of power. He reigns the greatest monarch the world ever saw, and a short period of time has carried him through all his conquests, and placed him upon a throne that commands the whole earth. He has prevailed upon or compelled a great part of mankind to adore him as a God, and of those that refused he has sacrificed an infinite number to his rage and jealousy. But unhappy being! now approaches the period which the Supreme Being, the Almighty, has fixed to his dominion. The three years and a half allowed him to tyrannise over mankind, are now expiring. And it had been pronounced: *judgment shall sit, that his power may be taken away, and be broken in pieces, and perish even to the end*, Dan. vii. 26. Intoxicated however with pride and power, and stimulated by satan, he pursues his former resolution to suffer no rival, but to contend for superiority with the sovereign of heaven, contemning what he had heard from the Christians, that all power should be wrested from him by Christ, and himself laid in the dust In this view he proposes to cope with Christ and all his heavenly attendants, by a proportionable army assembled from the whole earth by the three evil spirits that had been sent, as we have seen, for that purpose. His thoughts are now wholy bent upon preparations for this daring encounter. He therefore drops the persecution, and ceases the war.——And now *the second woe is past*, that is the persecution and war of Antichrist: *and behold the third*

woe, or day of judgment, *will come quickly*, Apoc. xi. 14. Here the prophet Daniel pronounces: *Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh unto a thousand three hundred thirty-five days*, xii. 12. He had said in the preceding verse: *from the time, when the continual sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination unto desolation be set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred ninety days.* These 1290 days, which are dated from the time of Antichrist setting himself up for God and forbidding all Christian worship, now expire with the close of his persecution; and that number being taken from 1335, there remain 45 days from the close of his persecution to the day of his destruction: and therefore Daniel pronounces him *blessed* who lives to see that day. This space of 45 days Antichrist employs in collecting together all his armies.

We may on our side employ a share of this time in taking a view of the great body of martyrs, the glorious victims of this persecution. To separate the good from the bad members, Christ has subjected his Church to the severest trial she ever underwent, and streams of holy blood have been flowing to appease the divine anger irritated against mankind for the excess of their wickedness. St. John thus exhibits to us the sight he was favoured with of that blessed company, after they were crowned.

Chap. vii. v. 9. *After this I saw a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues: standing before the throne, and in sight of the lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands.* A numberless multitude appears to St. John, consisting of people of all nations from the four parts of the earth, clothed in *white robes* in token of their present bliss, and with *palms in their hands*, the known emblems of victory. In this attire they are presented before *the throne*, and the *lamb*.

V. 10. *And they cried with a loud voice, saying: salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the lamb.* They break forth into loud acclamations, saying: *Salvation*, or victory, *to our God who sitteth upon the*

throne, and to the lamb, victory and triumph to the Almighty and to our Saviour over their enemies.

V. 11. *And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the ancients, and the four living creatures: and they fell down before the throne upon their faces, and adored God,*

V. 12. *Saying; Amen. Benediction, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, honour, and power, and strength to our God for ever and ever. Amen.* The angels here join in the profoundest homage to Almighty God. They acknowledge and praise his providential dispensations to his Church on earth, with the seven same expressive terms, except one, which were applied to the lamb, Apoc. v. 12.

These terms of acclamation to the Almighty are: *Benediction*, or praise for the immortal bliss he imparts to his saints: *Glory*, that is reflected upon him for his bountiful admonitions to mankind, conveyed by extraordinary signs and threatening prodigies in the heavens and in the earth: *Wisdom*, in raising up kingdoms and demolishing others according to the wise determination of his justice: *Thanksgiving*, for his protection of the Church against the power of heresy and schism: *Honour*, which he receives from the glorious conflicts and victory of his martyrs: *Power*, which he has so fully manifested in subduing the world by the word of his gospel: and *strength*, which he exhibits in his terrible scourges upon the wicked part of his people. St. John proceeds,

V. 13. *And one of the ancients answered, and said to me: these that are clothed in white robes, who are they? and whence came they?*

V. 14. *And I said to him: My Lord, thou knowest. And he said to me: these are they who are come out of great * tribulation, and have washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the lamb.* St. John, not knowing in particular what that holy troop was, is here informed that they came from *the great tribulation*, that is, from the great persecution of Antichrist, and that

* In the Greek, *the great tribulation.*

they *have washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the lamb:* they have *washed* them by martyrdom, and they have *made them white* by entering into glory, both which favours were purchased to them by *the blood of the lamb.*

V. 15. *Therefore they are before the throne of God, and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne, shall dwell over them.* The martyrs are placed in the presence of their God, to whom they offer constant homage and adoration: and he will *dwell over them,* by infusing the joy of beatitude into their souls, and being their liberal Lord and gracious governor for ever.——Lastly,

V. 16. *They shall no more hunger and thirst, neither shall the sun fall on them, nor any heat.*

V. 17. *For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall rule* * *them, and shall lead them to the fountains of the waters of life, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.* Their afflictions and hardships are now all over. They are now promised to be no more subject to the torments or sufferings they have undergone, either from *hunger* or *thirst,* or from *the sun or any heat falling upon them,* that is, from any sort of fire, natural or artificial; many of them having probably been famished to death, others burned, and others shot. On the contrary, their bodies, after the general resurrection, will enjoy a most pure and perpetual feast, in being *fed* by the *Lamb* and refreshed by the most pleasant *living waters,* in such manner as is suitable to their glorified state. Before, St. John said: they *are* before the throne of God, &c. to indicate the happiness of their souls immediately after their passage to the other life: But here he says: they *shall* no more hunger and thirst, &c. to denote the future period after the general resurrection, when their bodies, which were associated in the hardships, will likewise enjoy their share of beatitude. Furthermore, one may here observe the suppression of the word *and,* which is so constantly repeated through the Apocalypse. In

* In the Greek, *shall feed them.*

verse the 15th was expressed the beatitude of the soul, and in verse the 16th that of the body: the disparity of these two beatitudes could not well admit of the conjunctive particle *and*, while the terms of soul and body were not expressed.——And *God will wipe away their tears* of sorrow: by filling them with the abundance of the sweetest joy and most perfect happiness for all eternity.

On the expiration of the 45 days abovementioned, Antichrist having collected together all the forces, assembled by the three evil spirits who *had gone forth unto the kings of the whole earth to gather them to battle against the great day of the Almighty God*, Apoc. xvi. 14, he encamps them in the valley of Josaphat, between Jerusalem and Mount Olivet, and pitches his own tent on that mountain. He had probably been forewarned by the Christians, that this would be the theatre of his destruction, and therefore he chooses it in defiance of Heaven. That this will be really the place, we seem to learn, first, from St. John, who, after the words just above cited, adds: *And he shall gather them together, into a place, which in Hebrew is called Armagedon*, Apoc. xvi. 16. The word Armagedon is interpreted the *mountain of fruits*, which may indicate the mountain of Olives. The same is pointed out by the prophet Daniel, who speaks thus: *And he shall fix his tabernacle Apadno between the seas, upon a glorious and holy mountain; and he shall come even to the top thereof, and none shall help him*, xi. 45. Antichrist will fix *his tabernacle Apadno*, that is, his magnificent tent, called Apadno, upon a mountain, viz. Mount Olivet, which has been made *glorious and holy* by the Ascension and other sacred transactions of our Saviour, and stands between the Mediterranean and Dead *Seas*. There he will arrogantly fix his standard, but *none* will be able to *help him* against the power of the Almighty.

We have likewise in the prophet Joel, not only express mention of the same place of encampment, but also a remarkable description of the assembling of this army and its impending fate.

Chap. iii. v. 1. *For behold*, says the Lord, *in these*

days and in that time when I shall bring back the captivity of Juda and Jerusalem.

V. 2. *I will gather together all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Josaphat* *. The Almighty then says that, soon after he shall have *brought back* the Jews from their *captivity*, an event we have before related, he will collect all nations *into the valley of Josaphat*, the place insinuated by St. John and Daniel.—The Almighty continues to speak,

V. 2. *And I will plead with them there for my people, and my inheritance Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and have parted my land.*

V. 3. *And they have cast lots unto my people: and the boy they have put in stews, and the girl they have sold for wine that they might drink*, &c. &c. The Almighty will there *plead with them* or reprove them for the injuries they have done to *his people*, the Christians, and to *his inheritance the Israelites* during the tyranny of the Antichristian power. He proceeds to enumerate several of those injuries, which he declares he will retaliate upon them. After which he continues,

V. 9. *Proclaim ye this among the nations: prepare war, raise up the strong: let them come; let all the men of war come up.*

V. 10. *Cut your plowshares into swords, and your spades into spears. Let the weak say: I am strong.*

V. 11. *Break forth, and come, all ye nations from round about, and gather yourselves together.* Here the Almighty challenges them to battle; after which he pronounces,

V. 12. *There will the Lord cause all thy strong ones to fall down.* There will *the Lord*, the Almighty Son of God, crush thee, O Antichrist, and all *thy strong* men. Hitherto God had spoken to them altogether, challenging them to battle; but here he suddenly changes his discourse, and addresses solely their commander, Antichrist: *there will the Lord cause all thy strong ones to fall.*——Joel goes on,

V. 13. *Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe:*

* *Josaphat* signifies the *Judgment of the Lord.*

come, and go down, for the press is full, the fat runs over; for their wickedness is multiplied. The harvest and vintage are ready; and therefore people are called to reap the corn, and to gather and tread the grapes; an allusion, showing that the *wickedness* of these nations is so *multiplied*, that they are ripe for the slaughter which is going to be made of them.——Joel continues,

V. 14. *Nations, nations in the valley of destruction; for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of destruction.*

V. 15. *The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars have withdrawn their shining.*

V. 16. *And the Lord shall roar out of Sion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem: and the heavens and the earth shall be moved: And the Lord shall be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.* Numberless *nations*, immense armies, now appeared gathered together in the valley of Josaphat, the *valley of destruction*, all which the Lord has determined quickly to destroy.

And when he shall come down from Heaven to execute his judgments upon these armies, *the sun and moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining*, and he will pass over Jerusalem with a dreadful noise, that will strike them with terror and dread: *the Lord shall roar out of Sion and utter his voice from Jerusalem.*

To this we may add a sublime, pathetic, and short description of the same tremendous scene from the prophet Isaiah.

Chap. xxxiv. v. 1. *Come near, ye Gentiles, and hear, and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and every thing that comes forth of it.*

V. 2. *For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he has killed them and delivered them to slaughter.*

V. 3. *Their slain shall be cast out, and out of their carcasses shall rise a stink: the mountains shall be melted with their blood.*

V. 4. *And all the hosts of the heavens shall fine away, and the heavens shall be folded together as a book: and all their hosts shall fall down, as the leaf falls from the*

vine, and from the figtree. Here the Almighty declares in the most solemn manner, his *indignation* is going *to fall upon all nations, and his fury upon their armies*, and he will deliver them up *to slaughter*, ver. 1, 2. Such will be soon the fate of Antichrist and his armies. What is added of *their slain being cast out*, and a stench rising *from their carcasses*, &c. ver. 3, seems to belong to the destruction of Gog and Magog, which we shall see afterwards. But before these terrible judgments happen, *all the host of the heavens shall pine away*, ver. 4, *and shall fall down, as the leaf falls from the vine, and from the fig-tree: and the heavens shall be folded together as a book.* These threatening signs in the heavens, which were also just abovementioned in Joel, are here expressed nearly in the same terms, as we saw them in the Apocalypse under the sixth Seal, where we read: *The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood: and the stars from Heaven fell upon the earth, as the fig-tree casts its green figs when it is shaken by a great wind. And the heaven departed as a book folded up*, Apoc. vi. 12, 13, 14. Isaiah had forewarned us in another place: *The day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and high minded, and upon every one that is arrogant, and he shall be humbled.——And the loftiness of men shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be humbled, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.——And they shall go into the holes of rocks, and into the caves of the earth from the face of the fear of the Lord, and from the glory of his Majesty, when he shall rise up to strike the earth*, ii. 12, 17, 19. St. John speaks in the same tenour under the sixth Seal: *The kings of the earth*, says he, *and the princes—hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of mountains: and they say to the mountains and the rocks: fall upon us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb*, Apoc. vi. 15, 16.—See the explication of the sixth Seal.

Antichrist therefore having seated himself upon Mount Olivet, with his armies round him extended over the valley of Josaphat and adjacent plains, he

haughtily thinks himself equal to cope with all the powers of heaven. This *man of sin*, this *son of perdition*, this enemy of God and men, though upon the brink of destruction, persists in his resolution to defend his impious and insolent pretensions. He claims to himself the power and honours that belong to the Supreme Deity, and will permit no other but himself to be thought master of the world. He has, for the space of three years and a half, exercised the most despotic and cruel tyranny over mankind, and now he braves the Almighty himself. But, behold!

Chap. xix. v. 11. *And I saw heaven opened*, says St. John, *and behold, a white horse: and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true, and with justice doth he judge and fight.*

V. 12. *And his eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many diadems, and he had a name written, which no man knows but himself.*

V. 13. *And he was clothed with a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is called, The word of God.* The Heavens open, and St. John sees Jesus Christ, the Son of God, descending, seated on a *white horse*, in the same manner as we saw him first set out on his conquests; which shows him to have been all along continuing them: *He went forth conquering that he might conquer*, Apoc. vi. 2. He is known by the peculiar appellations here attributed to him: *faithful* and *true*, ver. 11; *faithful* in protecting his servants and revenging their injuries upon their enemies, and he is ever *true* to his promises. As *the Father has given all judgment to the Son*, John v. 22, so the Son *with justice doth judge and fight*, which he is coming to do at present. But what eminently distinguishes him, is his name, *The word of God*, ver. 13, which is well understood to belong solely to him; but it is so comprehensive in its meaning, that human reason cannot fathom it, and *no man knows it but himself*, ver. 12. *His eyes were as a flame of fire*, indicating his anger; and *on his head were many diadems*, the mark of his power over all those nations he is now coming to punish: and as this will be done by a great slaughter of all Antichrist's armies, he

therefore appears *clothed with a garment sprinkled with blood.*——St. John proceeds,

V. 14. *And the armies that are in heaven followed him on white horses, clothed in fine linen white and clean.* The celestial armies of saints follow the Son of God, as their captain and commander; they are all, like him, mounted on *white horses*, and clothed *in fine linen white and clean*, a symbol of their merit and glory.

V. 15. *And out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp two-edged sword: that with it he may strike the nations. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness of the wrath of God the Almighty.*

V. 16. *And he hath on his garment and on his thigh written, King of kings and Lord of lords.* A *sharp two-edged sword* is the weapon Christ will use to *strike the nations*, which are assembled with Antichrist against him. The sword is said to *proceed from his mouth*, because it executes his command. The Son of God is the sovereign master and judge of all mankind, and therefore he *rules* his rebellious subjects *with a rod of iron*, by scourging them in this life, and subjecting them to everlasting punishments in the next. And he *treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness of the wrath of God the Almighty*, that is, he is the minister of the Almighty's *wrath*, and executes his terrible judgments upon the wicked. In fine, the Son of God is entitled to all this power, because he is *King of kings and Lord of lords;* which name is written *on his garment*, that it may be visible to every eye; and *on his thigh*, to show that he is possessed of strength to vindicate his sovereign title, the *thigh* being commonly put for the emblem of strength in man. Some of the attributes here mentioned are also ascribed to Christ by the prophet Isaiah: *Why then is thy apparel red*, says he, *and thy garments like theirs that tread in the wine-press? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the Gentiles there is not a man with me: I have trampled on them in my indignation, and have trodden them down in my wrath, and their blood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my apparel*, lxiii. 2, 3.——St. John proceeds,

V. 17. *And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that did fly through the midst of heaven: Come, gather yourselves together to the great supper of God*.*

V. 18. *That you may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of tribunes, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all freemen and bondmen, and of little and of great.* While Christ, the divine hero, is advancing to battle with his celestial army, an angel in the sun with a loud voice invites all the *birds* of the air to a most plentiful entertainment which is preparing for them; where they may fill themselves with human flesh of all kinds, from that of *kings* to that of *slaves*, and with the *flesh of horses* and that of *their riders:* an expressive picture of the immense slaughter that is going to be made. It would seem that this bloody scene will terminate in the evening of the day, as the invitation is given to a *supper*——Then,

V. 19. *And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together, to make war with him that sat upon the horse, and with his army.* We have just now seen the heavenly captain on horseback, at the head of his holy troop, marching to battle; and now we see who are the enemies he comes to encounter. Here is the *beast*, or Antichrist, with prodigious armies gathered from all parts of the earth, and headed by their *kings* and princes. Here they are met with that Satanic design of engaging in battle *with him who sits upon the horse*, the omnipotent Son of God. *The kings of the earth*, says the royal psalmist, *have stood up, and the princes have met together, against the Lord, and against his Christ:* but thou, O Christ, *shalt break them in pieces like a potter's vessel*, Psalm ii. v. 2, 9. No more is man than a *potter's vessel*, when he contends with the Almighty. The decisive moment is come. This is *the day of the Lord in the valley of destruction*, Joel iii. 14. This is *the great day of the Almighty God*, Apoc. xvi. 14, in which he will show to whom belong empire and victory. For,

* In the Greek, *to the supper of the great God.*

V. 20. *And the beast was taken*, pursues St. John, *and with him the false prophet, who wrought signs before him, wherewith he seduced them who received the character of the beast, and who adored his image. These two were cast alive into the pool of fire burning with brimstone.* At the terrible appearance of Christ descending through the skies with his army, his enemies are struck with dread and consternation; and by his order the *beast*, Antichrist, is seized and made captive, and with him the great impostor, his *false prophet*, who by delusive *signs* and wonders had seduced such numbers to become the *beast's* votaries. Christ with the sole breath of his mouth hurls down Antichrist *alive* into hell-fire, *that wicked man, whom*, as St. Paul informs us, *the Lord Jesus shall kill*, or exterminate, *with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming*, 2 Thess. ii. 8. The prophet Isaiah had likewise said: *with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked man*, xi. 4. The false prophet is also precipitated down along with his master. Thus will be exterminated that *beast*, Antichrist, the greatest monster of impiety the earth ever bore, the declared enemy of Christ, *the man of sin, the son of perdition*, as St. Paul styles him, an idolater, a mock-god, a more cruel persecutor of the Christians than Nero or Dioclesian. From the pinnacle of arrogance and power he will be flung down, and in a moment buried alive in the bottomless pit. *I have seen the wicked man*, says the psalmist, *highly exalted, and lifted up like the cedars of Libanus. And I passed by, and lo he was not: and I sought him, and his place was not found*, Psalm 36. v. 35.——Lastly,

V. 21. *And the rest were slain*, continues St. John, *by the sword of him that sitteth upon the horse, which proceedeth out of his mouth: and all the birds were filled with their flesh.* Immediately upon the destruction of Antichrist and the false prophet, the whole army is slaughtered; Christ commanding his *two-edged sword*, or giving it to an angel, to do the execution. In such a wide field of carnage, *the birds* of the air, which had all been invited to this *supper*, are now *filled* and sated *with the flesh* of the dead bodies. *If I shall whet my sword*

as the lightning, said the Lord, *and my hand take hold of judgment: I will render vengeance to my enemies, and repay them that hate me.—My sword shall devour flesh.—— Praise his people, ye nations, for he will revenge the blood of his servants*, Deuter. xxxii. 41, 42, 43. And thus we see executed the sentence, taken notice of before, which Christ pronounced at the beginning of Antichrist's persecution and war: *He that shall kill by the sword, must be killed by the sword*, Apoc. xiii. 10.

Such will be the dreadful vengeance the Almighty Son of God, *the King of kings, and Lord of lords*, will take upon his enemies, and in this conspicuous manner will he vindicate his sovereign dominion, and rescue his faithful servants from that intolerable tyranny they have laboured under for three years and a half. This exploit of the Almighty Son of God, we see expressed beautifully by his prophet Isaiah: *Dixistis enim*—— Idcirco *hæc dicit Dominus Deus; delebitur* fœdus vestrum, &c. Isai. xxviii. 15, 18. But we seem to be furnished with further interesting circumstances of this memorable day by the prophet Zachary, if we understand right his following prophecy.

Chap. xiv. v. 1. *Behold the days of the Lord shall come, and thy spoils shall be divided in the midst of thee.*

V. 2. *And I will gather all nations to Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken, and the houses shall be rifled, and the women shall be defiled: and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the rest of the people shall not be taken away out of the city.* This siege and taking of Jerusalem by a body of Antichrist's troops, we have explained before. Zachary goes on,

V. 3. *Then the Lord shall go forth, and shall fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.*

V. 4. *And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is over against Jerusalem, towards the east: and the mount of Olives shall be divided in the midst thereof to the east, and to the west with a very great opening, and half of the mountain shall be separated to the north, and half thereof to the south.*

V. 5.——*And the Lord my God shall come, and all the*

Saints with him. The *Lord my God*, the Almighty Son of God, will come, accompanied by *all the Saints*, ver. 5, as St. John represented him, and he will destroy at once all *those nations*, ver. 3, as he destroyed *in the day of battle*, the Egyptians in the Red Sea. Mount Olivet, it is here said, ver. 4, shall be split in two; in order, perhaps, to open a passage to Antichrist and his false prophet, at the moment they are cast down alive into the infernal pit. Christ will *stand upon the mountain;* and while he is in this posture, the immense heap of slain lying in the plains below him, may not *his enemies* then be truly said to be *made his footstool?* Psalm 109. v. 1.

V. 6. *And it shall come to pass in that day*, continues Zachary, *that there shall be no light, but cold and frost.*

V. 7. *And there shall be one day, which is known to the Lord, not day nor night: and in the time of the evening there shall be light.* That *one day, known to the Lord*, is the day of vengeance upon Antichrist and his people, which properly will neither be *day nor night*, the sun, moon, and stars being obscured and veiled over, as we learned from Joel, saying of that day, *the sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars have withdrawn their shining*, iii. 15. The light that will then illuminate the earth, will be that resplendent brightness with which our Saviour will come down to do the execution. While the rays of the sun are thus intercepted, no wonder the air grows *cold and frosty*. But *in the evening there will be light*, that is, when the scene is over and Christ mounted up back to Heaven, the sun's light will return, viz. *in the evening*, the time indicated also by St. John, in the invitation of the birds to a *supper*.

V. 12. *And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord shall strike all nations that have fought against Jerusalem: the flesh of every one shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.* While Antichrist's armies in the vale of Josaphat are slain by the sword, those troops which took Jerusalem in the abovementioned siege, and treated there the servants of God so barbarously, will be punished by *their flesh* melting and consuming away, &c.

and thus the people will be preserved from any stench of the carcasses.

V. 16. *And all they that shall be left of all nations that came against Jerusalem, shall go up from year to year, to adore the king, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.*

V. 17. *And it shall come to pass, that he that shall not go up of the families of the land to Jerusalem, to adore the king, the Lord of Hosts, there shall be no rain upon them.* Those that join not Antichrist's army, but remain in their country, will be ordered to depute a certain number of persons to go every year to Jerusalem to celebrate *the Feast of Tabernacles:* and if any country neglect this obligatory devotion, it will be punished by the want of *rain.* The feast of Tabernacles was kept by the Jews in memory of their sojourning forty years in the desert, and this place may signify the solemn festival, which will be annually observed by the Christians at Jerusalem, in memory of their deliverance from Antichrist, by the destruction of him and his people in and near that city. And as the feast of the tabernacles was kept on the 15th of the Hebrew month Tizri, which answers to the moon of our September; this may indicate that the great day of destruction will happen about the autumnal equinox; in which case, counting back three years and a half, Antichrist will begin his war and persecution in spring.

Though we have already seen a pretty ample account of the fate of Antichrist, we seem however to be presented with another beautiful picture of it, illustrated even with some new scenes, by the prophet Isaiah. Thus speaks he:

Chap. xiv. v. 3. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that when God shall give thee rest from thy labour, and from thy vexation, and from the hard bondage wherewith thou didst serve before,*

V. 4. *Thou shalt take up this parable against the king of Babylon, and shalt say: How is the oppressor come to nothing, the tribute hath ceased?*

V. 5. *The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked, the rod of the rulers,*

V. 6. *That struck the people in wrath with an incura-*

ble wound, that brought nations under their fury, that persecuted in a cruel manner.

V. 7. *The whole earth is quiet and still, it is glad and hath rejoiced.*

Though this prophecy may in some measure relate to the king of ancient Babylon, yet it seems to be principally spoken of Antichrist, king of the last Babylon, and to be finally completed in him. It is usual with prophets to join in the same description, two objects that have a relation one to the other. Here then the Almighty tells his people that, when they shall be freed from their *labour*, *vexation*, and *hard bondage* under Antichrist, ver. 3, they shall address Heaven in a hymn of praise and thanksgiving, saying: *How is the oppressor*, Antichrist, *come to nothing? The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, the rod of the rulers, that struck the people in wrath with an incurable wound, that brought nations under in fury, that persecuted in a cruel manner:* and now *the whole earth is quiet and still, it is glad and hath rejoiced*, ver. 4, 5, 6, 7.

V. 9. *Hell below*, continues the prophet, *was in an uproar to meet thee at thy coming, it stirred up the giants for thee. All the princes of the earth are risen up from their thrones, all the princes of nations.*

V. 10. *All shall answer and say to thee: thou also art wounded as well as we, thou art become like unto us.*

V. 11. *Thy pride is brought down to hell, thy carcass is fallen down: under thee shall the moth be strewed, and worms shall be thy covering.* Here we see the reception Antichrist meets with at his arrival in the infernal regions. All *hell is in an uproar*, the *princes*, the *giants*, or famous warriors whom he had slain, *rise up* and advance to meet him, addressing him with derision: Oh! *Thou art also wounded* then *as well as we*, thou art at last dealt with as thou dealt with us: *Thy pride is brought down to hell*, &c.

V. 12. *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, who didst rise in the morning? how art thou fallen to the earth, that didst wound the nations?*

V. 13. *And thou saidst in thy heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exhalt my throne above the stars of God, I*

will sit in the mountain of the covenant, in the sides of the north.

V. 14. *I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the most high.*

V. 15. *But yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, into the depth of the pit.* The princes in hell continue to insult Antichrist, saying: *How art thou fallen*, thou that shone in majesty and brightness like *Lucifer*, the morning star? They remind him of his former pride, arrogance, superlative insolence, his proclaiming himself God, &c. all which they paint in lively colours: after which with a contemptuous triumph they tell him: *But yet thou shalt be brought down to hell into the depth of the pit.*

V. 16. *They that shall see thee, shall turn towards thee, and behold thee: is this the man that troubled the earth, that shook kingdoms,*

V. 17. *That made the world a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof, that opened not the prison to the prisoners?*

V. 18. *All the kings of the nations have all of them slept in glory, every one in his own house.*

V. 19. *But thou art cast out of thy grave as an unprofitable branch, defiled, and wrapped up among them that are slain by the sword, and are gone down to the bottom of the pit as a rotten carcass.*

CHAPTER XII.

The Continuation of the History of the sixth Age.

NOTWITHSTANDING the vengeance of God as thus manifested itself in the total extermination of ıntichrist and his armies, his wrath is not yet satisfied, ut requires more victims to atone for the injury done › his holy worship by the establishment of idolatry, and ɔr the cruelties exercised upon his servants. The Al-ıighty had formerly poured out his indignation upon ıe Roman emperors, many of whom were struck, and erished under the visible marks of his judgments. But ıis was not sufficient, he devoted haughty imperial ome, their capital, to destruction, and laid it in ashes. t had participated with its masters in the crime of sup-orting idolatry, and waging war against the saints, and herefore like them was to be cut off. In the same ıanner Constantinople, the centre and metropolis of the ıntichristian empire, must also fall under the weight f the hand of God. This we learn from St. John: for hus speaks he,

Chap. xiv. v. 8. *And another angel followed, saying: That great Babylon is fallen, is fallen *: which made all ıations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.* This Babylon has been supposed by many interpreters o mean pagan Rome, but whoever studies the Apoca-ypse with attention, will see the error of that opinion. For St. John gives the destruction of heathen Rome in he beginning of the 18th chapter, as we have before ıeen, and in the same terms nearly, not entirely, as are

* In the Greek, *Babylon the great city is fallen, is fallen.*

used here: and as St. John never repeats the same event, this second Babylon must be another city, *the great city*, which *has made all nations to drink of the wine of her fornication* or idolatry. This Babylon therefore can be no other than Constantinople, the imperial city of Antichrist, which has so readily joined him in admitting idolatry, and so hotly concurred to propagate it over the whole earth. Besides, the same conclusion follows from observing, that the transactions related in this 14th chapter belong to the last period of the world. Other proofs will also presently occur.

But our Christian prophet has not only announced to us in general the fall of this last Babylon, but even gives us a specifical description of its destruction. This is found in the latter part of the 18th chapter. St. John, after carrying on his narrative of the fate of old Rome, in the first part of the same chapter, proceeds in verse 20th, to invite Heaven and the Saints to rejoice and exult on the occasion: *Rejoice over her*, says he, *thou heaven and ye holy Apostles and Prophets: for God has judged your judgment on her.* This indicates that he here concludes his description of the fall of Babylon or pagan Rome. What follows, belongs therefore to the second Babylon or Constantinople, and is related thus:

Chap. xviii. v. 21. *And a mighty angel took up a stone, as it were a great mill-stone, and cast it into the sea, saying: with such violence as this shall Babylon that great city be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.* Here then Constantinople falls, and the manner of her fall is expressed in clear and energetic terms. As a mill-stone thrown with violence into the sea, sinks to the bottom in a moment, so will Constantinople be swallowed up by the sea in an instant, never more to be seen.

This description cannot, it is evident, belong to Rome, which does not stand upon the sea. Besides, ancient Rome, after its destruction, was in some degree rebuilded, and still subsists; whereas, this last Babylon, after its fate, *shall be found no more at all.*

The prophet goes on,

V. 22. *And the voice of harpers, and of musicians, and of them that play on the pipe and on the trumpet, shall no more be heard at all in thee, and no craftsman of any art whatsoever shall be found any more at all in thee, and the sound of the mill shall be heard no more at all in thee.*

V. 23. *And the light of the lamp shall shine no more at all in thee, and the voice of the bridegroom and bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth, for all nations have been deceived by thy enchantments.* Neither music, nor dancing, of which the eastern nations are fond, nor other diversions, shall ever more be heard or seen in that city, &c. All is profound silence, and utter desolation. No more vestiges even of that great city remaining than of Sodom and Gomorrha, the very place buried in the deep. Her crimes had grown to their full measure. Her luxury had been excessive, to serve which the *great men* and the princes of the earth had been compelled to strip themselves and to furnish her with every thing that was valuable. Her voluptuousness was such that she seduced *all the nations* by her riches and her pleasures, which, like an *enchantment*, fascinate the minds of men. By these allurements she had, like ancient Rome, ensnared mankind into her vices and idolatry.

Such is the general view of the state of that imperial city, as it will be at the time of her fall. But what completed to make her infinitely odious in the sight of God, and to force down the divine vengeance upon her, was,

V. 24. *And in her*, says St. John, *was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.* In the exultation for the fall of pagan Rome in verse 20th the *Apostles* were mentioned, because their blood was found there, as having been spilled by her emperors and magistrates. This not being the case of the last Babylon or Constantinople, in *her* is found *the blood of prophets and of saints*, of Henoch and Elias, and of an infinite multitude of Christian martyrs, cruelly put to death by her emperor, Antichrist, and his magistrates; *blood* which cried to heaven for vengeance, and in which he had a share. It is even said that in her

was found the blood *of all that were slain upon the earth.* All this blood is imputed to the city of Constantinople, because she was the capital of Antichrist's empire, which extended over the whole earth. In this same sense it was said that heathen Rome *was drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus*, Apoc. xvii. 6, not only of those who had been put to death within her walls, but likewise of all others who had suffered in the extent of her dominions through the whole period of the persecutions.

As the subversion of the Antichristian Babylon, in the prophetic history, follows immediately that of the Roman Babylon; in like manner the exultations in heaven for both are joined to one another. The jubilation for the fall of pagan Rome begins thus: *After these things I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying*, ALLELUIA, &c. Apoc. xix. 1. And that for the fall of Constantinople, thus: *And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude—saying, Alleluia*, &c. ibid. ver. 6. The same mode of speech used in both these places, as St. John never repeats the same thing, shows that these expressions of jubilation relate to two different objects, that is, to the fall of two different Babylons. This observation premised, the present exultation is,

Chap. xix. v. 6. *And I heard*, says St. John, *as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord our God the Almighty hath reigned.* St. John heard the voice of *a great multitude* in heaven, of that *great multitude* of martyrs which he had seen *standing before the throne*, and who *had come out of the great tribulation*, or persecution of Antichrist, Apoc. vii. 9, 14. To these is joined a voice, as *the voice of many waters*, that is, of the angels that preside over nations, denoted by *waters*, which had all before groaned under the tyranny of Antichrist: and also another voice, like the voice of *great thunders*, or of the angel that presides over fire, which, as employed in military engines, by its explosion resembles *thunder*; and such thundering fire was the instrument Antichrist made use of *to kill the third part of men*, Apoc. ix. 18. All these different personages

have therefore reason to rejoice on this occasion, and to join their voices in singing, *Alleluia: for the Lord our God the Almighty hath reigned*, has asserted his sovereign power, and crushed his enemies.

The prophet Isaiah, in denouncing the divine wrath upon Babylon of Chaldæ, seems also to have annexed the judgment that is to fall upon the last or Antichristian Babylon. The fall of the first is fully described in chapter 13th, and what follows in the subsequent chapter must therefore belong to another city; which is confirmed by particular circumstances there related. Part of the preamble used by that prophet seems also to be referred to the last Babylon. Thus speaks he,

Chap. xiii. v. 9. *Behold the day of the Lord shall come, a cruel day, and full of indignation, and of wrath, and fury, to lay the land desolate, and to destroy the sinners thereof.*

V. 10. *For the stars of heaven, and their brightness, shall not display their light: the sun shall be darkened in his rising, and the moon shall not shine with her light.* These signs indicate the last age of the world.

V. 11. *And I will visit the evils of the world, and against the wicked for their iniquity, and I will make the pride of infidels to cease, and will bring down the arrogance of the mighty.*

Then in the next chapter the prophet, after describing the character of Antichrist and the divine judgment upon him, proceeds to relate the destruction of his Babylon thus:

Chap. xiv. v. 22. *And I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of Hosts: and I will destroy the name of Babylon, and the remains, and the bud, and the offspring, saith the Lord.*

V. 23. *And I will make it a possession for the ericius* * *and pools of waters, and I will sweep it, and wear it out with a besom, saith the Lord of Hosts.* The *remains* of Babylon; the *bud* of Babylon, perhaps the children in the womb; and the *offspring*, are all doomed to be utterly extirpated. This did not happen to the Chaldæan Babylon, which was gradually abandoned by its inhabit-

* A water bird.

ants; and will only therefore be completed in Babylon, the great city of Antichrist.

We have now seen the execution of the divine judgments upon Antichrist's armies and his great city. But as his magistrates and his adherents, who are dispersed in all the different countries of the earth, may be deemed equally guilty with those that have perished, it seems to appear that the hand of divine vengeance will also reach them. This is announced immediately after the sentence past upon the last Babylon, and is as follows:

Chap. xiv. v. 9. *And the third Angel followed them, saying with a loud voice: If any man shall adore the beast and his image, and receive his character in his forehead, or in his hand;*

V. 10. *He also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mingled with pure wine in the cup of his wrath, and shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the sight of the holy angels, and in the sight of the lamb.* Those therefore that have *adored the beast*, or Antichrist, *and his image, and received his character*, or mark, are condemned *to drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mingled with pure wine in the cup of his wrath*, that is, those who have been guilty of all the three abovenamed crimes, they will be slain, in the same manner as Antichrist's army. To *drink of the wine of the wrath of God*, denotes the divine punishment on the body or corporeal part of man, as *wine* itself is not a pure substance, but contains gross lees; and the mixture of *pure wine in the cup of the wrath of God*, indicates the simultaneous punishment of the soul, which is a *pure* substance, and which on the slaughter of the body is violently separated from it. When both these component parts, soul and body, are reunited at the general judgment, then the whole man *shall be tormented with fire and brimstone* in hell, *in the sight of the holy angels, and in the sight of the lamb.* But,

V. 11. *And the smoke of their torments*, proceeds St. John, *shall ascend up* * *for ever and ever: neither have*

* In the Greek, *ascends up.*

they rest day nor night, who have adored the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the character of his name. Here is the present fate of the soul, which at the instant of death is *tormented* in hell-fire, without intermission or *rest:* which is the sentence pronounced upon all those *who have adored the beast*, &c. whatever may be their death, and whenever it may happen.——Then St. John adds,

V. 12. *Here is the patience of the saints, who keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.* Here is the motive, on which is founded the *patience* of the true servants of God, namely, in bearing with all trials, hardships, and persecutions in this life, with the view of avoiding the eternal torments, and purchasing the eternal rewards, of the other world.

The preceding dreadful judgment of God on the votaries of Antichrist, wherever they be, seems to be also foretold explicitly by the prophet Jeremy, as follows:

Chap. xxv. v. 15. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: take the cup of wine of this fury at my hand: and thou shalt make all the nations to drink thereof, unto which I shall send thee.* Expression similar to what we saw above in St. John.

V. 30. *And thou shalt prophesy unto them all these words, and thou shalt say to them: the Lord shall roar from on high, and shall utter his voice from his holy habitation: roaring he shall roar upon the place of his beauty: the shout as it were of them that tread the grapes, shall be given out against all the inhabitants of the earth.*

V. 31. *The noise is come to the ends of the earth: for the Lord entereth into judgment with the nations: he entereth into judgment with all flesh; the wicked I have delivered up to the sword, saith the Lord.*

V. 32. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: behold evil shall go forth from nation to nation: and a great whirlwind shall go forth from the ends of the earth.*

V. 33. *And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even to the other end thereof: they shall not be lamented, and they shall not be gathered up, nor buried: they shall lie as dung upon the face of the earth.* Here is the tremendous *roaring noise*, ver.

30, 31, before taken notice of from Joel, of Christ coming from Heaven to destroy Antichrist and his people. The Lord *entereth into judgment with all flesh*, and *delivers the wicked up to the sword*, ver. 31, and *the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even to the other end thereof*, v. 33. Hence it appears, that not only Antichrist's armies, assembled in the valley of Josaphat, shall be slain by the sword, but all his principal idolatrous abettors shall be cut off in the same manner in every part of the earth. Moreover we are here told, *they shall not be lamented, and they shall not be gathered up, nor buried: they shall lie as dung upon the face of the earth.* The same we also learn from the prophet Isaiah: *And they*, the people, *shall go out*, says he, *and see the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched: and they shall be a loathsome sight to all flesh*, lxvi. 24. It may seem strange that the inhabitants of Jerusalem should not be annoyed with the stench of such a heap of dead bodies lying so near them in the vale of Josaphat; but the infection is prevented by the birds devouring the flesh, as St. John told us, and leaving the bodies mere skeletons.

By the destruction of Antichrist, his armies, officers, and chief associates, we now see his kingdom dissolved, his power totally extinguished, and consequently the Roman empire finally put an end to. The prophet Daniel had foretold that Christ, or the *stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands*, should break down the *statue*, the *legs* and *feet* of which represented the Roman empire. This was executed in part by the fall of pagan Rome with its dominion, and by the establishment of Christianity upon its ruins. But this prophecy seems to receive a further, adequate, and final completion in the extermination of Antichrist, the last and greatest of the Roman emperors, in the destruction of Constantinople, his imperial city, and in the total suppression of the Antichristian power. From such a complete victory over its enemies, rises then the completest triumph of the Christian religion. Such appears to be the import of that prophecy, in which Da-

niel speaks thus to Nabuchodonosor: *Thus thou sawest, till a stone was cut out of a mountain without hands: and it struck the statue upon the feet thereof that were of iron and of clay, and broke them in pieces: then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of a summer's threshing floor, and they were carried away with the wind: and there was no place found for them: but the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth*, ii. 34, 35.

Here then we may congratulate ourselves for having seen at last an end put to the innumerable evils and miseries which Antichrist brought upon mankind, and which St. John denominates *the second wo*, Chap. xi. 14. *The second wo*, says he, *is past: and behold, the third wo will come quickly*. The above dismal scene being over, the respite will not be of very long duration; for behold, *the third wo*, or day of judgment, *will come quickly*, is not far off.

But now the servants of God seemed at last to be rescued from their intolerable slavery, and were much rejoiced at the prospect of a happy peace. They saw their persecutors had all perished under the hand of the Almighty, they saw idolatry crushed, and that religion had regained its liberty. This bright gleam of happiness must however suffer some obscurity yet for a little while, before it shines forth in all its lustre. An unforeseen storm arises, which alarms them, especially those that inhabit Judæa and Jerusalem. Satan, foiled in his prior designs before he could bring them to perfection, retires at seeing the divine vengeance coming to break on the head of Antichrist, and resolves to try another effort, if not effectual for recovering his power, at least to annoy and distress those he hates, the Christians. He therefore sets forward to raise up new enemies. This we learn from St John, who says,

Chap. xx. v. 7. *And when the thousand years shall be finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go forth, and seduce the nations, which are over the four quarters of the earth, Gog, and Magog, and shall gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the*

sand of the sea. We have already seen how Satan stirred up *the nations which are over the four quarters of the earth*, and what desolation and havoc they made. He now instigates another great prince, named Gog, to rise with his people, who are called Magog, and with other nations, and to proceed against the people of God. The omission here of the usual conjunctive particle *and* before the name of Gog, may be one among other indications, that this is a different army from that of the nations just before mentioned, and will come at a different time. But of this prince and his army and their march, we have a more explicit account in the prophet Ezekiel, who gives it thus:

Chap. xxxviii. v. 1. *And the word of the Lord came to me, saying:*

V. 2. *Son of Man, set thyself against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Mosoch and Thubal: and prophesy of him,*

V. 3. *And say to him: Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I come against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Mosoch and Thubal.*

V. 4. *And I will turn thee about, and I will put a bit in thy jaws: and I will bring thee forth, and all thy army, horses and horsemen all clothed with coats of mail, a great multitude, armed with spears, and shields, and swords.*

V. 5. *The Persians, Ethiopians, and Lybians with them, all with shields and helmets.*

V. 6. *Gomer, and all his bands, the house of Thogorma, from the northern parts, and all his strength, and many people with thee.*

V. 7. *Prepare and make thyself ready, and all thy multitude that is assembled about thee: and be thou commander over them.* Here then the Almighty challenges to battle the prince Gog with all his *great multitude*, or, as St. John says, *the number of whom is as the sand of the sea*, consisting of the people of *Magog*, that is, as commonly understood, of a people of ancient Scythia, or what is now called Great Tartary, and of other Asiatic provinces under the names of *Mosoch*, *Thubal*, *Gomer*, and *Thogorma*. He will be also attend-

ed by the *Persians*, *Ethiopians*, and *Lybians*.——The Almighty continues to speak,

V. 8. *And after many days thou shalt be visited: at the end of years thou shalt come to the land that is returned from the sword, and is gathered out of many nations, to the mountains of Israel which have been continually waste: but it hath been brought forth out of the nations, and they shall all of them dwell securely in it.* Gog therefore will come *at the end of years*, or in the last period of time, *to the land that is returned from the sword, and is gathered out of many nations*, &c. that is, he will come to invade Judæa, from whence the Jews had been formerly expelled by the Roman *sword*, but are now returned and become Christians, and are resettled in their land, in the possession of which they will be secured by the divine hand against all attempts.

V. 9. *And thou*, Gog, *shalt go up and come like a storm, and like a cloud to cover the land, thou and all thy bands and many people with thee.*

V. 10. *Thus saith the Lord God: In that day projects shall enter into thy heart, and thou shalt conceive a mischievous design.*

V. 11. *And thou shalt say: I will go up to the land which is without a wall, I will come to them that are at rest, and dwell securely: all these dwell without a wall, they have no bars nor gates.* This refers to what St. John relates of Gog and his army: *and they came upon the breadth of the earth, and encompassed the camp of the saints*, the good Christians, *and the beloved city* of Jerusalem, Apoc. xx. 8. It also refers to the future prosperous state of that city as foretold by the prophet Zachary: *Jerusalem shall be inhabited without walls*, says he, *by reason of the multitude of men, and of the beasts in the midst thereof*, ii. 4.——Ezekiel proceeds to give the reason of Gog's invading Judæa:

V. 11. *To take spoils, and lay hold on the prey, to lay thy hand upon them that had been wasted, and afterwards restored, and upon the people that is gathered together out of the nations, which hath begun to possess and to dwell in the midst of the earth.* Here is the intent of Gog's coming, viz. to plunder the converted Jews and Christians

that are settled in Judæa, and who are come into possession of the immense spoils of Antichrist's army, as we learn from the prophet Zachary, who speaks thus of the abundance of those spoils: *And the riches of all nations round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and garments in great abundance*, xiv. 14.

V. 16. *And thou*, Gog, *shalt come*, continues Ezekiel, *upon my people of Israel like a cloud, to cover the earth. Thou shalt be in the latter days, and I will bring thee upon my land: that the nations may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.*

V. 17. *Thus saith the Lord God: Thou then art he, of whom I have spoken in the days of old, by my servants, the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in the days of those times that I would bring thee upon them:* namely, by the prophets Isaiah and Joel, as we shall see presently, besides Ezekiel.

V. 18. *And it shall come to pass in that day, in the day of the coming of Gog upon the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my indignation shall come up in my wrath.*

V. 19. *And I have spoken in my zeal, and in the fire of my anger, that in that day there shall be a great commotion in the land of Israel.*

V. 20. *So that the fishes of the sea, and the birds of the air, and the beasts of the field, and every creeping thing that creeps upon the ground, and all men that are on the face of the earth, shall be moved at my presence: and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the hedges shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.* Here is mention of different alarming signs that will happen about that time, some of which are similar to the following related by St. John under the sixth seal: *every mountain, and the islands were moved out of their places: and the kings of the earth, and the princes, and tribunes, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman, and every freedman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of mountains*, Apoc. vi. 14, 15.

V. 21. *And I will call in*, continues Ezekiel, *the sword against him in all my mountains, saith the Lord God: every man's sword shall be pointed against his brother.*

V. 22. *And I will judge him with pestilence, and with*

blood, and with violent rain, and vast hailstones: I will rain fire and brimstone upon him and upon his army, and upon the many nations that are with him. Here we see in what manner the Almighty will destroy Gog, with all his army, in the mountains of Judæa, by turning *every man's sword against his brother*, by *pestilence*, by *violent rain*, and *vast hailstones;* and, in fine, he will *rain fire and brimstone* upon them. To the same the royal psalmist seems to allude, saying: *The Lord shall rain snares upon sinners: fire and brimstone and storms of winds shall be the portion of their cup*, Psalm x. 7. St. John also gives us their destruction in few words, but to the same purpose: *And there came down fire from God out of heaven*, says he, *and devoured them*, Apoc. xx. 9. And thus is fulfilled what God had promised by his prophet Zachary: *I will be to Jerusalem, saith the Lord, a wall of fire round about*, ii. 5. The Almighty, again, speaking by his prophet Isaiah, after proclaiming his future vengeance upon the Antichristian Babylon, proceeds to announce also his judgments upon Gog in the same terrible language, styling that prince *the Assyrian*, on account of his reigning over the country formerly called *Assyria: so shall it fall out*, says God; *that I will destroy the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: and his yoke shall be taken away from them, and his burden shall be taken off their shoulder*, Isaiah xiv. 25. And again: *And the Lord shall make the glory of his voice to be heard, and shall shew the terror of his arm, in the threatening of wrath, and the flame of devouring fire; he shall crush to pieces with whirlwind and hailstones. For at the voice of the Lord the Assyrian shall fear being struck with the rod*, Isai. xxx. v. 30, 31.

Ezekiel having described the fate of God by anticipation, is told to return to the historical account of him:

Chap. xxxix. v. 1. *And thou, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say: thus saith the Lord God: behold, I come against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Mosoch and Thubal.*

V. 2. *And I will turn thee round, and will lead thee*

out, and will make thee go up from the northern parts: and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel.

V. 3. *And I will break thy bow in thy left hand, and I will cause thy arrows to fall out of thy right hand.*

V. 4. *Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou and all thy bands, and thy nations that are with thee: I have given thee to the wild beasts, to the birds, and to every fowl, and to the beasts of the earth, to be devoured.*

V. 5. *Thou shalt fall upon the face of the field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God.* With this account coincides what the Almighty promises the Jews by the prophet Joel: *I will remove far off from you*, says he, *the northern enemy: and I will drive him into a land unpassable, and desert, with his face towards the east sea, and his hinder part towards the utmost sea: and his stink shall ascend, and his rottenness shall go up, because he has done proudly*, ii. 20. Here the *northern enemy* points out Gog, who, according to Ezekiel, comes from the *northern parts*, v. 2. He is *driven into a land unpassable*, that is, into *the mountains of Israel*, v. 2, where he is placed between the *east* or Dead *sea*, and the *utmost* or Mediterranean *sea*. In these mountains, after that fire from heaven has slain him and his people, their carcasses shall lie to infect the air with *stench* and *rottenness*.—The Lord continues to speak by Ezekiel:

V. 6. *And I will send a fire on Magog, and on them that dwell confidently in the islands: and they shall know that I am the Lord.* Does not this perhaps mean, that at the time that Gog perishes, *fire* will also be sent to make destruction in *Magog*, his own country, and in the *islands* that are confederated with him?

V. 7. *And I will make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel, and my holy name shall be profaned no more: and the Gentiles shall know that I am the Lord, the holy one of Israel.*

V. 8. *Behold, it cometh, and it is done, saith the Lord God: this is the day whereof I have spoken.*

V. 9. *And the inhabitants shall go forth of the cities of Israel, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, the shields, and the spears, the bows and the arrows, and the hand staves, and the pikes: and they shall burn them with fire seven years.*

V. 10. *And they shall not bring wood out of the countries, nor cut down out of the forests: for they shall burn the weapons with fire, and shall make a prey of them to whom they had been a prey, and they shall rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord God.*

V. 11. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give Gog a noted place for a sepulchre in Israel: the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea, which shall cause astonishment in them that pass by: and there shall they bury Gog, and all his multitude, and it shall be called the valley of the multitude of Gog.*

V. 12. *And the house of Israel shall bury them for seven months to cleanse the land.*

V. 13. *And all the people of the land shall bury him, and it shall be unto them a noted day, wherein I was glorified, saith the Lord God.*

V. 14. *And they shall appoint men to go continually about the land, to bury and to seek out them that were remaining upon the face of the earth, that they may cleanse it: and after seven months they shall begin to seek.*

V. 15. *And they shall go about passing through the land: and when they shall see the bone of a man, they shall set up a sign by it, till the buriers bury it in the valley of the multitude of Gog.*

V. 16. *And the name of the city shall be Amona* *, *and they shall cleanse the land.*

V. 17. *And thou, O Son of man, saith the Lord God, say to every fowl, and to all the birds, and to all the beasts of the field: Assemble yourselves, make haste, come together from every side to my victim, which I slay for you, a great victim upon the mountains of Israel: to eat flesh, and drink blood.*

V. 18. *You shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and you shall drink the blood of the princes of the earth: of rams, and of lambs, and of he-goats, and bullocks, and of all that are well fed and fat.*

V. 19. *And you shall eat the fat till you be full, and shall drink blood till you be drunk of the victim which I shall slay for you.*

* Multitude.

V. 20. *And you shall be filled at my table with horses, and mighty horsemen, and all the men of war, saith the Lord God.*

V. 21. *And I will set my glory among the nations: and all nations shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them.*

Thus is Gog and his whole army exterminated. They are not allowed to reach Jerusalem, but are stopped by the divine hand at a distance in the mountains of Judæa, where by fire from heaven and other terrible judgments they all perish. And thus ends that impious enterprise of Gog, of which we have been reading in Ezekiel a full history rather than a prophecy.

Satan is here again defeated; nor is he now allowed to make further attempts. He has done immense mischief, by seducing mankind into idolatry, and raising up a most horrible persecution against the faithful servants of God. He has by his agents desolated countries, and destroyed a prodigious multitude of the human race: for *he was a murderer from the beginning*, John, viii. 44. But though he has acted by the suggestion of his own malice and hatred against God and man, yet it has not been done without the Almighty's permission, and it all serves the unfathomable purposes of divine wisdom. But now the period of the releasement of Satan is elapsed, in consequence of which St. John informs us:

Chap. xx. v. 9. *And the devil, who seduced them, was cast into the pool of fire and brimstone,*

V. 10. *Where* * *both the beast and the false prophet shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.* Here the prince of the infernal regions is cast down again into his prison, there to be closed up; and is plunged into the lake of hell-fire, there to be tormented for evermore with Antichrist and the false prophet. One may suppose that the greatest part of his hellish crew are banished along with him, to undergo the same fate. Some determinate number of them may perhaps be permitted to remain upon earth, to tempt mankind; as

* In the Greek, *where the beast and false prophet* are. *And they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

seemed to be the case when Satan was bound up in the abyss after the persecutions of the first Christian ages: but the power of these fiends will be circumscribed within much narrower bounds than it was before.

One cannot but here take notice, that our incomparable prophet opens to us a particular piece of history, which we were little acquainted with, namely, that of Satan, the prince of the apostate angels. In chapter xii. we see him falling down from heaven with his proud associates. We see his character described, and among other names there given him he is styled *the old serpent*, that is, the very serpent which deceived Eve, and by her seduction ruined all mankind. After having done that mischief, he proceeded by crafty insinuation to work upon mankind, and prevailed upon the greatest part of them to abandon the worship of their Creator, and to substitute idolatry in its place, that is, in reality the worship of Satan himself, and thus he *seduced the whole world*. At the rise of Christianity, we see him exerting his utmost efforts to crush it in its birth: for which purpose he stimulated the Roman emperors and others to oppose with all their might the propagation of the Christian religion. Christ, with his superior power, frustrated all these attempts; and expelled Satan from the face of the earth, and confined him in the infernal dungeon, Apoc. c. xx. where he is to remain for an appointed period of time, after the expiration of which he will be released for a short while. His employment will then be to re-establish idolatry, and to persecute the Christian religion. Antichrist will be his great instrument for these purposes. But after the extermination of that *son of perdition* and the destruction of Gog, Satan himself will then be remanded back to his infernal prison, never more to go forth from it.——Now to resume the thread of our history.

The expulsion of Satan from the earth who was the author of idolatry, and the extermination of Antichrist who was its supporter, are followed by the extirpation of idolatry itself. For such seems to be the language of the prophets. *The loftiness of men shall be bowed down*, says

Isaiah, *and the haughtiness of men shall be humbled, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And idols shall be utterly d stroyed*, ii. 17, 18. Thus also speaks the prophet Sophonias: *The Lord shall be terrible upon them, and shall consume all the gods of the earth*, ii. 11. In like manner we see the same work of the divine hand announced to us by the prophet Zachary: *And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will destroy the names of Idols out of the earth, and they shall be remembered no more*, xiii. 2. It is fit the offspring should follow the parent, or that idolatry should disappear with Satan.

And now we seem to be arrived at the glorious epocha of the triumph of the Church over all her enemies. The tyrants, that domineered over her, are crushed; the boisterous *winds* of persecution are ceased: and the anger of God, before inflamed by the excessive wickedness of mankind, is now appeased and gives way to mercy. Idolatry is vanished, and the cross of Christ is the sole standard that is acknowledged and resorted to. Christ has suppressed all adverse powers, both earthly and infernal, and now extends his dominion from one extremity of the earth to the other. People and kings equally bow down to receive his commands, and join in professing their submission to his Church, as we learn from Daniel: *And judgment shall sit*, says he, *that the kingdom and power, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, may be given to the people of the saints of the most High: whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all kings shall serve him and shall obey him*, vii. 26, 27. *He shall rule from sea to sea*, says the Psalmist speaking of Christ, *and from the river unto the ends of the earth—And all the kings of the earth shall adore him; all nations shall serve him*, Psalm lxxi. 8, 11.

The prophet Zachary acquaints us of the same, thus: *And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name shall be one*, xiv. 9, his *name* shall be one, or there shall be but one religion over the whole earth. These are the Halcyon days of the Christian people, during which the Almighty pours

forth the abundance of his spiritual and temporal blessings. To the storms of persecution and war succeed the calm of peace and the sunshine of joy and prosperity. And to this period seems to belong the following admonition:

Apoc. ch. xiv. v. 13. *And I heard*, says St. John, *a voice from heaven, saying to me: write, blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. For henceforth now, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours: for their works follow them.* Or rather, according to the Greek text: *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth. Certainly, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours: but their works follow them.* Those are here pronounced *Blessed*, who *from henceforth*, that is, from the time of the extermination of Antichrist and all external enemies, or who, during the time of peace, having no expectations of the crown of martyrdom, nevertheless live in the constant practice of virtue, and so merit to *die* in the favour of their *Lord*. *The spirit* or Holy Ghost confirms the sentence of their happiness not only because at the moment of their departure their hard *labours* and penitential exercises cease, but their souls are admitted to a glorious immortality, the recompense of their good *works*.

Such is the extraordinary happiness of this period of time that, as in the days of the birth of Christianity, so now the supernatural gifts of the Holy Ghost descend plentifully upon the zealous Christians: *And it shall come to pass after this*, says the Lord by Joel, *that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy: your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Moreover upon my servants and handmaids, in those days I will pour forth my spirit. And I will shew wonders in heaven, and in earth, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood: before the great and dreadful day of the Lord does come*, ii. 28, &c. While the bounties of God flow in a full stream upon mankind, we see nevertheless he thinks fit to send, at times, warnings of the approaching

great and dreadful day of the Lord, by signs and *wonders in heaven and earth*, agreeably to what we read in the Apocalypse under the sixth seal. The all-bountiful God desires, that all should watch and be prepared for the *great day* of judgment, which may be supposed not to be far distant at that time. For the same reason Christ, after *the battle of the great day of the Almighty God*, Apoc. xvi. 14, immediately proclaims: *Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.* Blessed is the man, that *keepeth* solicitously *his garments* of virtue and good works, lest at Christ's coming he be found *naked* and exposed to *shame* and condemnation.

If we turn our eyes on another side, we see a beautiful picture exhibited to us by the prophets of the temporal prosperity, which will be enjoyed at this period of time by the Jews, that is, the Jews changed into Christians, under whose name may be comprehended the whole body of the Christian people. Among the many passages relating to this subject, we shall recite a few.

Joel, after describing the great slaughter in the vale of Josaphat, thus continues:

Chap. iii. v. 17. *And you shall know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Sion, my holy mountain: and Jerusalem shall be holy, and strangers shall pass through it no more.*

V. 18. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down sweetness, and the hills shall flow with milk: and waters shall flow through all the rivers of Juda: and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the torrent of thorns.*

V. 19. *Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom a wilderness destroyed: because they have done unjustly against the children of Juda, and have shed innocent blood in the land.*

V. 20. *And Judæa shall be inhabited for ever, and Jerusalem to generation and generation.*

Ezekiel speaks in the following manner:

Chap. xxxvii. v. 21. *And thou shalt say to them: thus saith the Lord God: behold, I will take the children of Is-*

rael from the midst of the nations whither they are gone: and I will gather them on every side, and will bring them to their own land.....

V. 24. *And my servant David* shall be king over them, and they shall have one shepherd, they shall walk in my judgments, and shall keep my commandments, and shall do them.*

V. 25. *And they shall dwell in the land which I gave to my servant Jacob, wherein your fathers dwelt, and they shall dwell in it, they and their children, and their children's children, for ever: and David my servant shall be their prince for ever.*

V. 26. *And I will make a covenant of peace with them, it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will establish them, and will multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for ever,* &c.

The same prophet, after relating the destruction of Gog, pursues thus, or rather the Almighty by his mouth.

Chap. xxxix. v. 22. *And the house of Israel shall know that I am their Lord their God from that day and forward.*

V. 26. *And they shall bear their confusion, and all the transgressions wherewith they have transgressed against me, when they shall dwell in their land securely, fearing no man.*

V. 28. *And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, because I caused them to be carried away among the nations: and I have gathered them together unto their own land, and have not left any of them there.*

V. 29. *And I will hide my face no more from them, for I have poured out my spirit upon all the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.*

The prophet Amos gives us also a pleasing description of the same prosperity.

Chap. ix. v. 13. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of the grapes of him that soweth seed: and the*

* *Christ, the Messiah.*

mountains shall drop sweetness, and every hill shall be tilled.

V. 14. *And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel: and they shall build the abandoned cities, and inhabit them: and they shall plant vineyards, and shall drink the wine of them; and shall make gardens, and eat the fruits of them. And I will plant them upon their own land: and I will no more pluck them out of their land, which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God.* Such is this remarkable æra of peace, prosperity, and spiritual blessings.

One may naturally suppose that the Christians, at their emerging from the severe trials they had been subjected to, were uncommonly full of zeal and religious fervour: and so it seems to be intimated by the above-cited passages out of the prophets. But the human mind from its native inconstancy soon forgets the greatest troubles, when they are passed. Prosperity also is a charm generally productive of inattention and neglect, and contributes much to revive in man his natural propensity to licentiousness. Such will be the case of this last period of time, in which mankind will gradually relax in their fervour, and degenerate in their morals. Our Saviour has told us to beware of the last day, to watch, and be ready to appear before him at the bar of judgment: *Watch ye*, says he, *because ye know not what hour your Lord will come.—Be you ready, because at what hour ye know not, the Son of man will come*, Matt. xxiv. 42, 44. And again he speaks in the Apocalypse:—*Behold I come as a thief*, xvi. 15. St. Peter also gives us the same warning: *The day of the Lord will come as a thief*, 2 Pet. iii. 10. But these admonitions will by degrees lose their influence and be forgotten, the human passions will recover their power, and the pleasures of the world will become again the common pursuit of men; as we learn from our Saviour's own words: *As in days of Noe*, says he, *so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, even till that day in which Noe entered into the*

. And they knew not till the flood came, and took m all away: so also shall the coming of the Son of man

Matt. xxiv. 37, 38, 39. Thus then the generality mankind having degenerated into a state of forgetful- ss of God, employed now in indulging themselves in sual gratifications, unmindful of all the ominous rming signs that had preceded, and the repeated ad- nitions given them, Behold! *The seventh seal is open-*

CHAPTER XIII.

The History of the seventh Age of the Christian Church.

The seventh Seal is opened.

APOC. Chap. VIII. v. 1. *And when he*, the Lamb, *had opened the seventh Seal, there was silence in Heaven, as it were, for half an hour.* The Lamb having opened the *seventh Seal*, there follows *a silence in Heaven* for a while, in appearance about *half an hour*. During this time, the Almighty thinks fit to disclose to the whole heavenly court of angels and saints, his eternal and inscrutable decrees respecting mankind and the existence of this world *. The heavenly auditory attend in *silence* and with profound respect, while he graciously unfolds to them the whole system of economy by which he has governed the world ever since its creation, and the whole course of his great and merciful dispensations to man. The Almighty is willing to display before them the immense and superabundant store of blessings that have flowed from the inexhaustible source of his paternal affection upon mankind, ever since the first moment of their existence. He shows, that his tenderness and bounty towards mankind, have been without measure, and that if a great number of them perish, their perdition is owing to themselves. He then makes known his intention of putting an immediate stop to the whole human race, and bringing them to judgment: he signifies, that the time he had

* This he does, not in words, but by secret interior communication, such as is suitable to the nature of spirits.

fixed for the existence of the world, is now expired, and he is now going to put an end to it *. Upon which,

The seventh Trumpet sounds.

Chap. xi. v. 15. *And the seventh Angel sounded the Trumpet: and there were great voices in heaven, saying: the kingdom of this world is become our Lord's and his Christ's, and he shall reign for ever and ever. Amen.*

V. 16. *And the four and twenty Ancients, who sit on their seats in the sight of God, fell on their faces, and adored God,*

V. 17. *Saying: We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, who art, and who wast, and who art to come: because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and thou hast reigned,*

V. 18. *And the Nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst render reward to thy servants the Prophets, and the Saints, and to them that fear thy name, little and great, and shouldst destroy them who have corrupted † the earth.*

V. 19. *And the temple of God was opened in heaven: and the ark of his testament was seen in his temple, and there were lightnings, and voices ‡, and an earthquake, and great hail.*

On the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which follows on the Almighty concluding the communication of his councils, all the heavenly choirs break out into acclamations and applause, saying: *The kingdom of this world is become our Lord's and his Christ's, and he shall reign for ever and ever:* or, praise be to the Lord, be-

* That such are, in part, the Divine intimations on this occasion, may be collected from the applauses of the heavenly choirs expressed in the following Trumpet—As upon the opening of the seventh Seal the period of the world finishes, it is just that at that time the wise and bountiful economy of Christ, through the whole government of his Church, should be acknowledged. For that reason *Benediction*, or praise, was solemnly offered to the *Lamb*, Apoc. v. 12.—See page 18.

† In the Greek, *who destroy the earth.*

‡ Here the Greek text adds, *thunderings.*

cause he is going to take possession of all the kingdoms of the earth, &c. Thus they acknowledge, it is time that he should suffer no longer any human power to reign; but that he, Omnipotent, with his eternal Son, the Christ, should assume all dominion and sway for ever. Then *the four and twenty ancients*, v. 16, 17, whom we saw from the beginning sitting round the throne of God, fall down prostrate before the Almighty, and offering their homage, give him thanks also for assuming all *power* into his hands, as belonging solely to himself, *who is, who was, and who is to come*, that is, who is the beginning and end of all things, who *was* the Creator, *is* the conservator, and *will come* presently as the judge, of all mankind. The ancients continue to say: *the nations were angry*, v. 18; mankind in different ages abandoned thee, their God, rebelled against thee, and set up the infamous worship of idols; they endeavoured to exterminate thy holy name from the earth, and they waged war against thy people; but *thy wrath is come*, and it is just it should now at last overtake them, and punish them according to their deserts. We are glad *the time of the dead* is come, *that they should be judged*, &c. the course of human nature has run a sufficient period; it is now fit and just, that judgment should be passed upon the whole race of men, that *your* faithful *servants* may receive the full *reward* they have deserved, and your enemies be *destroyed*, or a final period be put to the efforts of the wicked, who are labouring to subvert your holy worship, and again to corrupt mankind. Thus the whole company of angels and saints express their approbation of the divine decrees and declarations, which the Almighty had condescended to communicate to them.

Then *the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of his testament*, or covenant, *was seen in his temple*, v. 19. This passage alludes to the sanctuary or holy of holies of the temple in Jerusalem, which was kept shut and contained the ark of the covenant. That ark was ordered by Almighty God to be thus kept as a monument and testimony of the covenant he had made with the Jews. And as the opening of the sanctuary at Jeru-

salem, when the veil that hung before it, was rent in two at our Saviour's death, showed that the Jewish covenant was then fulfilled and terminated; so here, the *temple*, or Sanctuary *of God in heaven*, is opened, and the *ark* of his covenant with the whole human race, is exposed fully to view, to indicate that God has now fulfilled his covenant, or all his engagements with mankind relative to this world, which is therefore now to be put an end to.

We had heard the Angel that stood upon the sea and land, Apoc. x. 5, 6, solemnly proclaim, that at the sounding of the seventh Trumpet, *time shall be no more.* The Trumpet has sounded, and here then is finishing the period of time allotted for the existence of the world. The destruction of the whole frame of the universe follows, and is ushered in by the terrifying alarms mentioned above: *and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail,* v. 19. Upon which immediately

The seventh Vial of the wrath of God is poured out.

Chap. xvi. v. 17. *And the seventh Angel poured out his Vial upon the air, and there came a great voice out of the temple from the throne, saying: It is done.*

V. 18. *And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and there was a great earthquake, such an one as never had been since men were upon the earth, such an earthquake, so great.*

V. 19. *And the great city was divided into three parts: And the cities of the Gentiles fell. And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the indignation of his wrath.*

V. 20. *And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*

V. 21. *And a great hail like a talent came down from heaven upon men: and men blasphemed God for the plague of the hail: because it was exceeding great.*

The seventh Vial is poured upon the *air*, which lies between the earth and the heavens, to indicate that the judgments of God are going to fall upon both the heavens and the earth, that is, on the whole system of the

creation. *And there came a great voice out of the temple*, v. 17, *from the throne*, where sits the Almighty, *saying*, *It is done:* all is over; this is the last hour; time shall be no more. Then follow the dreadful calamities of the last hour. *And there were lightnings*, v. 18, *and voices, and thunders, and there was a great earthquake, such an one as never had been seen since men were upon the earth, such an earthquake, so great.* Here is enough to strike all the living at that time with dread, horror, and consternation. We saw the same sort of disasters happen at the sounding of the Trumpet, but here they are renewed and aggravated to the most terrible degree. The heavens echo with the loudest and most terrifying *thunder;* the sky is rent in every part with most dreadful flashes of *lightning;* and the whole air resounds with horrible *voices* or noises. The earth is shaken from its foundations with an *earthquake*, such as has never been felt before, nor has ever entered into man to imagine such an one. The whole compages or fabric of the world is unhinged, and falls to pieces. All is confusion, wreck, and ruin. The *great city* of Jerusalem, v. 19, is split *into three parts*, and the other *cities* of the world *fall* all to the ground. But such is the weight of God's anger against the *great Babylon*, that is, the two Babylons, viz. pagan Rome and pagan Constantinople, or against the heathen Roman emperors and their people, and against Antichrist and his people, for their impiously opposing the worship of him to give place to idolatry, and for their spilling so much of the blood of his faithful servants: such, I say, is the weight of God's anger against them, that they stand as the principal detestable object in his sight, and he now resolves to make them drink the full *cup of the wine of the indignation of his wrath*, by completing the measure of their punishment, in dooming their bodies, together with their souls, to burn in the most scorching flames of fire and sulphur for ever.

Such is the general concussion caused by the abovementioned earthquake, that all the *islands* immediately vanish, v. 20, being perhaps either sunk in the deep, or thrown against the continent; and of the *mountains*,

some tumble to pieces, and are levelled with the surface of the earth, by the same cause; others burst out into volcanoes, and by their internal fire are dissolved and melted into a fluid matter *. Then follows a storm of *hail*, v. 21, infinitely exceeding what had ever been heard of: the hailstones are of the weight of a *talent*, or fourscore pounds; which doubtless must kill a great number of people. But, notwithstanding such a shocking catastrophe—strange!—many will persist obstinate in their wicked dispositions, will not yield to turn their hearts to repentance and sue for pardon in these last moments, but will even complete their impiety by *blaspheming God* for these calamities which they suffer.

As all mankind are sentenced to die, those that are not carried off by the disasters just mentioned, will probably be dispatched by the fire which will go before the Son of man when he comes to Judgment: for so it seems to be specified by the Royal Psalmist, with other circumstances relating to this terrible day: *A fire shall go before him*, the Lord: *and shall burn his enemies round about. His lightnings have shone forth to the world: the earth saw and trembled. The mountains melted like wax at the presence of the Lord; at the presence of the Lord all the earth. The Heavens declared his justice, and all people saw his glory.* Psalm xcvi. And again, in another place: *The earth shook and trembled: the foundations of the mountains were troubled and were moved, because he*, the Lord, *was angry with them. There went up a smoke in his wrath: and a fire flamed from his face: coals were kindled with it. He bowed the heavens and came down, and darkness was under his feet,—— And the Lord thundered from Heaven, and the Highest gave his voice, hail and coals of fire. And he sent forth his arrows, and he scattered them: he multiplied lightnings and troubled them. Then the fountains of water appeared, and the foundations of the world were discovered.* Psalm xviii. It is plain that many of the dreadful events and convulsions of nature here expressed, are

* Before, we saw the islands and mountains *moved out of their places*, Apoc. vi. 14, but here they entirely disappear.

the same with those related above by St. John. Such will be the frightful scenes, the universal confusion and destruction in that day of wrath, that day of tribulation and distress, that day of calamity and misery. The prophet Isaiah has also sketched out to us the outlines of that same terrifying picture:

Chap. xxiv. v. 17. *Fear, and the pit, and the snare are upon thee, O thou inhabitant of the earth.*

V. 18. *And it shall come to pass, that he that shall flee from the noise of the fear, shall fall into the pit: and he that shall rid himself out of the pit, shall be taken in the snare; for the floodgates from on high are opened, and the foundations of the earth shall be shaken.*

V. 19. *With breaking shall the earth be broken, with crushing shall the earth be crushed, with trembling shall the earth be moved.*

V. 20. *With shaking shall the earth be shaken as a drunken man, and shall be removed as the tent of one night: and the iniquity thereof shall be heavy upon it, and it shall fall, and shall not rise again.*

The beautiful frame of the universe being therefore now totally disfigured, broken, torn to pieces, and reduced to a mere wreck, fire will be the instrument the Almighty will use to dissolve the whole mass; as we learn from St. Peter, 2 Epist. Chap. iii. v. 10. *The day of the Lord shall come as a thief, in which the heavens shall pass away with great violence, the elements shall be melted with heat, and the earth and the works which are in it, shall be burnt up.*

V. 11. *Seeing then that all these things are to be dissolved, what manner of people ought you to be in holy conversation and godliness,*

V. 12. *Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of the Lord, by which the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with the burning heat?* Here then we see that the world will be set on fire, that the *heavens* will be quickly *dissolved*, by the prodigious activity of the fire, and so vanish; that the *earth* will be likewise *burned with the works that are in it*, with all that it contains within it or upon its surface; and that the *elements*, namely, water and air, will lose

their fluidity, and their substantial parts will be dissolved or *melted*. *Heaven and earth shall pass away*, said our Saviour, Luke xxi. 33. But we must observe, it is not said that they will be wholly consumed and annihilated, but dissolved or burned, and consequently transformed into a different appearance, as God shall direct.

But while these stupendous operations of fire are subverting nature and changing the whole face of the universe, the Son of man descends from the highest Heaven to come and judge mankind. For, the *Father doth not judge any man; but hath given all judgment to the Son*, John v. 22.

Apoc. Chap. xx. v. 11. *And I saw*, says St. John, *a great white throne, and one sitting upon it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away, and there was no place found for them.*

V. 12. *And I saw the dead, great and small, standing in the presence of the throne, and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged by those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

The son of God appears in the firmament *seated* on a *great* and bright *white throne*, and at his presence *the earth and heaven flee away*, or disappear, that is, the earth, the atmosphere, and all belonging to the sky, are not only inwraped in flames, but entirely *pass away* and vanish out of sight, so that, *their place is not found* nor can be distinguished. Nothing is now visible of the works of the creation. The sole object, that fills the expanse of heaven, is the resplendent majesty of the son of God sitting on his throne. The *dead* then, both *great and small*, of all ranks and degrees, appear before him, namely, the last generation of the human race, who have just expired in the general destruction of the world. This prodigious multitude of souls are summoned to undergo the particular judgment which is fixed for all mankind at the hour of their death: *It is appointed unto men once to die, after this, the judgment*, Ep. to the Hebr. ix 27. This particular judgment must be here meant by St. John, and not the general judgment which is described in the next verse, as our prophet

never repeats the same thing. The *books are opened*, and will remain open during the general judgment that is quickly to follow. In these *books* are recorded the actions of every individual man, according to which sentence will be passed upon him. The son of God, from his own infinite knowledge, is equally acquainted with the works of every man, as if they were registered in a book; but this figurative expression shows the rigour and exactness of his scrutiny, which will not let the least fault or good work escape his notice. Another *book* is likewise *opened*, viz. *the book of life*, in which are written the names of all the predestined or elect.

This numerous company of souls being therefore judged *by those things which were written in the books, according to their works*, Christ sends forth his messenger, an archangel, who by his order blows *the last trumpet*; the sound of which echoes to all the extremities of the earth. At this sound, in an instant, all the dead rise up from their graves, never more to die. *In a moment*, says St. Paul, *in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise again incorruptible*, 1 Cor. xv. 52. The general resurrection is likewise thus briefly described to us by St. John:

Apoc. chap. xx. v. 13. *And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and hell gave up their dead that were in them.* The *sea* is first here said to deliver up its *dead* By the *sea*, in our prophet's language, we must understand the whole extent of the terraqueous globe, in as much as it contains the dead bodies of the saints, who may be said to have waded through the tempestuous *sea* of this world, or through a long course of tribulations, persecutions, and hardships, which sanctifiest their lives. Their bodies therefore rise up the first, and this is confirmed by St. Paul: *The dead who are in Christ, shall rise first*, 1 Thess. iv. 15. Heaven presents their souls, and by the happy union of soul and body, the saints stand vested with complete immortality. Then *death* and *hell* give up *their dead*; *death* here signifying the graves of the wicked, as containing the mortal part of those whose souls lie in *the death* of damnation. These bodies likewise rise to life, and are joined to

their souls which *hell* vomits up, and thus they become inseparable companions of the same eternal fate which they will soon be deemed to undergo. Every individual of mankind being thus raised to life, from Adam to the last of the human race, they will all see the Almighty son of God coming down through the upper regions of the sky, seated on bright clouds as upon a throne, surrounded with the splendour of his divine majesty, attended by the angels, and his cross, the instrument of the world's redemption, carried before him: *And then*, says Christ himself, *shall appear the sign of the Son of man in Heaven: and then shall all tribes of the earth mourn: and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty*, Matt. xxiv. 30. And our prophet in the Apocalypse also says of him: *Behold, he cometh with the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him. And all the tribes of the earth shall bewail themselves because of him*, i. 7. The appearance then of the son of God coming in his majesty to judgment will strike the wicked with dread and consternation. The different *tribes* of them will *mourn* and *bewail* their miserable condition: the Jews, that *pierced him* or put him to death, and those who had refused to acknowledge him for their Saviour and Messiah: the infidels, who would not be converted, and who had persecuted him in his servants; in fine, the rest of the wicked, who had made no use of the redemption he had purchased for them, but on the contrary had heinously injured him by their repeated crimes and impiety. But on the other hand, what a consolation, what an auspicious moment, will it be for the just, to see their Redeemer coming to reward them and to make their happiness complete, for all eternity! They will fly to meet him, as their Father and Saviour, with inexpressible alacrity and joy; as we learn from St. Paul: *The Lord himself shall come down from heaven with commandment, and with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead who are in Christ, shall rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, shall be taken up together with them in the clouds to meet Christ, into the air, and so shall we be always with the Lord*, 1 Thess. iv. 15, 16.

All the individuals of the human race appear now existing at once and together, a wonderful spectacle that never was seen before, nor will be seen after. For this great company will soon be divided into two bodies that must separate, never more to be joined. They are called up and cited to appear at the bar of the throne and judgment-seat of the Son of God. There *they are judged every one according to their works*, Apoc. xx. 13. To the just are adjudged eternal rewards for their labours: and this may be styled, the second resurrection, as the prior admission of their souls to beatitude, on the death of their bodies, was called by St. John, *the first resurrection*, Apoc. xx. 5. The saints having thus received their happy sentence, are admitted to attend Christ and to sit with him in judgment over the wicked, according to what he had promised: *Amen, I say unto you, that you who have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats judging the twelve tribes of Israel*, Matt. xix. 28. Then follows the sentence upon the wicked, by which they are doomed to the unquenchable flames of hell for ever, or, as St. John expresses it,

Chap. xx. v. 14. *And hell and death were cast into the pool of fire. This is the second death.*

Hell and death, before, denoted the places where the souls and bodies of the reprobate lay, but here, by an easy transition, they are employed to signify these souls and bodies themselves, which *are cast into the* infernal *pool of fire:* and this damnation of both together, at the last judgment, is here denominated, *the second death;* while that of the soul only, which had preceded at the time of her separation from the body, may receive the name of First death.——Thus much from the Apocalypse.

But the general arraignment of all mankind before the tribunal of Christ at the last day, and the special judgment he will pass upon them, are more clearly and explicitly exhibited us by Christ himself in his following words: *When the Son of Man shall come in his majesty, and all the Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty: and all nations shall be gathered*

together before him, and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. Then shall the king say to them that shall be on his right hand: Come ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink, &c..... Then he shall say to them also that shall be on his left hand: Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire which was prepared for the Devil and his Angels. For I was hungry, and you gave me not to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me not to drink, &c.....And these shall go into everlasting punishment: but the just into life everlasting, Matt. xxv. 31, &c. And again our Saviour, speaking on the same subject in another place, says: *As tares are gathered up and burnt with fire, so shall it be at the end of the world. The Son of man shall send his Angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all scandals, and them that work iniquity: and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the just shine as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father*, Matt. xiii. &c. In fine, the General Judgment finishes by

Chap. xx. v. 15. *And whosoever*, says our Prophet, *was not found written in the book of life; was cast into the pool of fire.* All those who have not *by good works made sure their calling and election*, 2 Pet i. 10, and so have not gotten their names registered *in the book of life*, are condemned to hell-fire for all eternity.

The general judgment is an event so tremendous and so interesting to mankind, that our Saviour frequently inculcated it in his discourses, as we see in the Gospel: and St. John, in the Apocalypse, besides the natural description of it above-recited, gives us a second allegorical one, with new circumstances, under two elegant expressive figures of harvest and vintage. Thus paints the admirable and exact pencil of our incomparable Prophet:

Chap. xiv. v. 14. *And I saw, and behold, a white cloud: and upon the cloud one sitting like to the Son of*

man, having on his head a crown of gold, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

V. 15. *And another Angel came out from the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat upon the cloud: Thrust in thy sickle, and reap, because the hour is come to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.*

V. 16. *And he that sat on the cloud, thrust his sickle into the earth, and the earth was reaped.*

V. 17. *And another Angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.*

V. 18. *And another Angel came out from the Altar, who had power over fire: and he cried with a loud voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying: Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vineyard of the earth: because the grapes thereof are ripe.*

V. 19. *And the Angel thrust in his sharp sickle into the earth, and gathered the vineyard of the earth, and cast it into the great press of the wrath of God.*

V. 20. *And the press was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the press, up to the horses' bridles, for a thousand six hundred furlongs.*

The *Son of man*, v. 14, or Christ, is seen by St. John *sitting on a white cloud*, as we saw him before, bearing on his head *a crown of gold* for mark of his sovereign power and dominion over the world, and in his hand *a sharp sickle*, an instrument for cutting down corn. Then *an angel comes out from the temple* in Heaven, v. 15, from the Almighty who sits there enthroned, and brings orders to the Son of man to *thrust in his sickle, and reap; because the hour is come to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe;* the number of saints preordained by the Almighty is completed, and the period allotted to the existence of the human species is run out. Christ, in obedience to his Eternal Father, *thrusts his sickle into the earth, and the earth is reaped*, v. 16; he puts an end to the world, and reaps the *harvest* of his elect, by withdrawing them from all further labours, and gathering them to himself, as the husbandman gathers his corn into his granary. *And he*, the Son of man, *shall send his Angels with a Trumpet, and a great voice: and they shall gather together his Elect from the*

four winds, from the farthest part of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them, Matt. xxiv. 31. The harvest being made, follows the vintage.

An *angel comes out*, v. 17, *from the temple in heaven* as sent by the Almighty, with *a sharp sickle* also in his hand, and presently comes forth, v. 18, *from the altar* of Holocausts where fire was perpetually kept, a second *angel, who hath power over the fire*, and who is commanded, because perpetual fire is to be the punishment of the wicked, to tell the first angel to *thrust in his sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vineyard of the earth: because the grapes thereof are ripe*. The angel executes the order, cuts off in an instant the clusters of grapes over the whole earth, v. 19, gathers them together, and *casts them into the great press* or wine-press *of the wrath of God*: that is, the angel collects together the whole troop of the reprobate, and casts them, as being ripe for punishment, into the deep pit of hell. This is conformable to what we hear from our Saviour. *The Son of man*, says he, *shall send his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all scandals, and them that work iniquity: and shall cast them into the furnace of fire*, Matt. xiii. 41, 42. St. John then adds, v. 20, *And the press was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the press, up to the horses' bridles, for a thousand six hundred furlongs*. Here is a striking allegorical expression of the effusion of God's anger upon the damned, who are represented as *trodden* in the lake of hell, in the same manner as grapes are trodden in the wine-press: and the person that thus treats them, we are told, is Christ himself; *he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness of the wrath of God the Almighty*, Apoc. xix. 15. Christ is constituted the avenger of the injuries done to his Almighty Father, and is his minister to execute his judgments upon the impious. The allusion of the treading of the wine-press is carried on, and if it was supposed that the whole heap of the damned, lodged in the pit of hell, were there *trodden*, there would issue out from their bodies a quantity of *blood* that would cover a space of ground, all around, to the distance of a *thousand six hundred furlongs*, or two hundred miles, and to such a

height, that the blood would reach to the *horses' bridles*, if waded through. This sea of blood would not however affect *the city* or mansion of the blessed, which is placed at a great distance. One cannot but shudder at the picture here exposed to us, as it suggests the dismal idea of such an immense multitude of the human species devoted to the flames of hell without hope of redemption. For in effect, if a circular space of four hundred miles diameter, be covered with blood to four feet height, which is above the height of a middle-sized horse's bridle from the ground; and if we suppose fifteen pounds to be, at an average, the quantity of blood in a man; the density of blood being nearly one 25th greater than that of water, a foot cubic of which weighs a thousand ounces; we shall find, by making the computation, that the number of men's bodies, requisite to give the mass of blood abovementioned, will be upwards of 60,000,000,000,000.

We have now seen on one side, the body of the reprobate banished from the presence of Christ, and doomed to their perpetual prison: while on the other side, the whole company of saints shine with all the noble qualities belonging to bodies clothed with immortality. They now see the happy moment arrived for the accomplishment of all their expectations. That part of them who adorned the world before the Saviour of mankind appeared in it, are called into the heavenly mansions with angelical acclamations. They enter, singing in jubilation: *Come, let us praise the Lord with joy: let us joyfully sing to God our Saviour. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving: and make a joyful noise to him with psalms*, Psalm xciv. The other body composed of the Christian saints, are gratified in a peculiar manner with the gracious countenance of Christ, their Lord and master, who invites them to reign with him in bliss for all eternity. On so happy an occasion that crowns all their wishes, the heavens resound with the loudest acclamations of joy and exultation:

Chap. xix. v. 7. *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give glory to him*, God: *for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has prepared herself.*

V. 8. *And it was granted to her that she should clothe herself with fine linen, glittering and white. For the fine linen are the justifications of saints.*

V. 9. *And he said to me: Write, blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.* The heavenly choirs thus break out into jubilation and transports of joy, because the time is come for *the nuptials of the Lamb*, that is, for Christ to espouse his Church, which is the society of his saints, by taking her to himself, by freeing her from all enemies, by removing all evils for ever from her, by enriching her with every blessing, and in fine, by cherishing her as a spouse does his beloved consort. The *wife* or bride of the Lamb, that is, the company of Christian saints, appears in a suitable garb for the *marriage*. She is dressed in *fine linen*, the symbol of the *justifications* or the good works and merit of her holy members; the most pleasing attire in which she can present herself to the *Lamb*. Her robe is *glittering and white*, because she has been purified as silver in the furnace, and washed *white* in the waters of tribulation and persecution. Here then follows *the marriage of the Lamb*, or the gracious and affectionate union of Christ with his saints. He then introduces them into heaven, and presents them, as his bride, before the throne to his eternal Father. Then may be truly said, *Blessed are they*, v. 9, *that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb;* the saints are seated in glory, and filled with ineffable and endless bliss, which is the *marriage-supper*, the ultimate term of all.

After so glorious a conclusion of the marriage feast, St. John proceeds,

V. 9. *And he saith to me: these words of God are true.* The angel of Christ, that is, St. John Baptist, who, in the form of an angel, attends the apostle during this prophecy, gives testimony to what has been just pronounced; *Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb.* The angel affirms that these are the *words of God*, and consequently *true*, or will infallibly have their accomplishment at the appointed time, viz. at the last day.

The apostle supposing this to be the conclusion of all that was to be revealed to him, turns to the angel:

V. 10. *And I fell down*, says he, *before his feet, to adore him. And he saith to me: see thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Adore God. For the testimony of Jesus, is the spirit of prophecy.* St. John, in token of gratitude, offers to pay to the angel such homage as is due to a being of his rank, which the angel however refuses to accept, giving for reason, that he is a *fellow servant* of the apostle and of the apostle's *brethern* who bear *testimony to Jesus Christ*. This speech evidently agrees with the character of the Baptist, but not with that of a real angel. Then St. John is told to *adore God*, as the author of all prophecy: after which the angel adds: *for the testimony of Jesus, is the spirit of prophecy*, that is, the *testimony* which you give to Christ by suffering for his holy name and the profession of his doctrine, is of equal value with the *spirit of prophecy*, by which I reveal to you these future events.

Though the divine incomparable Revelation, here imparted to St. John, seemed in this place to terminate, as having carried on the history of the Christian Church from its birth to its triumphant state after the resurrection, yet we see further discoveries communicated, and new scenes shown to the apostle. He has described to us the wreck and dissolution of the world, the resurrection of mankind, the judgment passed upon them, with the punishment of the wicked and the recompence of the good. The prophet now proceeds to lay before us a series of new pictures, the objects of which are of so uncouth a nature, so different from any thing we are acquainted with, that it is beyond the power of man to explain them to full satisfaction. The first of these pictures he exhibits to us, is the following:

Chap. xxi. v. 1. *And I saw*, says he, *a new heaven and a new earth. For the first heaven, and the first earth, was gone, and the sea is now no more.* Here is a total change in our system of nature. The *earth*, that was, the *heaven* or sky, with its atmosphere, its clouds, &c. had *passed away* and vanished: but now a *new heaven and*

a new earth appear. The same we are taught by St. Peter: *We look*, says he, *for new heavens and a new earth, according to his promises, in which justice dwelleth*, 2 Ep. iii. 13. This new heaven and new earth are not of new creation, but the former heaven and earth, purified by fire, renewed by the hand of God, and made much more perfect: "not other heavens and another earth," says St. Jerome, "but the former ones changed into better." In Isai. lxv. And St. Gregory the great, speaking of the same, says: "Others are not to be created, but these same renewed." Lib. xvii. Moral. in Job. c. 5. This sentiment is founded on Scripture. The Psalmist represents the heavens and the earth growing old and wearing away like a garment, and then to be changed. *In the beginning, O Lord, thou foundedst the earth: and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest: and all of them shall grow old like a garment: and as a vesture thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed.* Psalm. 101. v. 26, &c. Solomen also seems to assure us, that every thing shall remain that has been created: *I have learned*, says he, *that all the works, which God has made, continue for ever*, Eccl. iii. 14. Upon which St. Gregory the Great's comment is: "they will pass, as to their present figure or appear-"ance, but as to their substance they will remain for "ever." Lib. xvii. Moral. in Job. c. 5. St. Austin tells us, that "by the change of things the world will "not entirely perish or be annihilated. Its form or ex-"ternal appearance will be changed, but not its sub-"stance." Lib. xx. de Civ. c. 14. And again more amply, "The figure of this world will pass away by the "general conflagration. The qualities of the corrupti-"ble elements, of which our world is composed, which "were proportioned to our corruptible bodies, will en-"tirely be destroyed by the fire; and the substance of "those elements will acquire new qualities, which will "be suitable to our immortal bodies: and thus the world, "by becoming more perfect, will be proportioned to "the then improved state of the human body." Ibid. c. 16. After the same manner speak St. Justin, St. Basil, and other holy fathers. Hence we may conclude

that our new world, as to its substance, will be the same as the old; but its qualities will be totally altered, so as to be no more pernicious to the human body, offensive to the senses, or obnoxious to unseasonable vicissitudes. Every part will then appear bright, glorious, pleasing to the senses, and inspiring happiness. They will form as it were a Paradise. Whether the superior heavens, that contain the sun, moon, and stars, will undergo the same change, is uncertain; and the writers on this subject are divided in their opinions.

St. John adds in this place a particularity worthy our notice; *and the sea is now no more;* being perhaps wholly dried up, as to its fluidity, by the fire; and its component solid parts reduced into the same state with the rest of the terrestrial globe. Thus the *sea* will be no more, as being of no further use. This entire suppression of the sea may give a reason, why the Angel, whose *feet were as pillars of fire*, when he announced the end of the world, stood with his *right foot* upon the sea, and his *left* upon the land, Apoc. x. 1, 2; the right foot denoting a greater power or strength, which is here required to consume water, so much more opposite in its nature to *fire* than dry land.

The scene of nature being now totally changed, and the new heavens and the new earth being formed, St. John proceeds,

Chap. xxi. v. 2. *And I John saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven, from God.* Here our Prophet begins a new period, which is, the period of eternity. He had hitherto related the history of the Christian Church in a regular course from its first rise to its passing away with time itself, and with the destruction of the world. He does not however stop here, but, eagle-like, with a new flight carries us into the regions of eternity, and shows us a sketch of the glorious state the blessed will enjoy during that endless period. The account of this new period St. John now begins, and for that reason says not simply, *I saw*, as is usual with him; but *I John saw*, in the same manner as he began the first part of his history, with, *I John, your Brother.....was in the Spirit on the*

Lord's day, &c. Apoc. i. 9, 10. From what we have seen, it appears that St. John's prophecy is almost confined to the history of the Christian Church, but that he has nevertheless gone beyond that boundary, in the instance of relating to us the general judgment of all mankind. In like manner he is now going to describe the heavenly triumphant state of the whole Church of God, that is, of the whole body of the saints. But we must here take notice of the plan which he follows, which is, to divide them into two societies. The first is, of the saints that lived in the ages prior to Christianity, and who worshipped the Supreme Deity in the Unity of Godhead. The second society comprehends all Christian saints, who adored God in Trinity of persons. These observations premised, we now return to the text.

Chap. xxi. v. 2. *And I John saw*, says he, *the holy city the new Jerusalem coming down out of Heaven, from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

V. 3. *And I heard a great voice from the throne, saying: behold the Tabernacle of God with men, and he will dwell with them. And they shall be his people: and God himself with them shall be their God.*

V. 4. *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away.*

V. 5. *And he that sat on the throne, said: Behold, I make all things new.*

This *holy city*, this *new Jerusalem*, that is seen descending *from Heaven, from God*, and appears so bright and shining, like a *bride* dressed up to meet *her husband*, is the Heaven or the glorious and happy mansion of all the saints that existed before our Saviour, or that lived under the law of nature and the Mosaic: and it is *new* in allusion to the former Jerusalem which had been their habitation on earth. This heavenly Jerusalem may therefore be styled the Patriarchal and Jewish Jerusalem. We shall see in the sequel the Christian Jerusalem. This *new city* of the blessed is seen coming *down out of Heaven from* God, to the new earth when

it fixes, to show that now Heaven and earth are joined, and that Heaven is there wherever God is. To express the extraordinary degree of light with which this heavenly city will be illuminated, Isaiah says: *The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days*, xxx. 26. The expressions that follow in verse 8, *behold the tabernacle of God with men, and he will dwell with them*, &c. apparently belong to the Jewish and Patriarchal ages, and frequently occur in the Old Testament, and particularly in the ancient prophets: which shows that this is the Patriarchal and Jewish Heavenly Jerusalem. The holy inhabitants of this city will be blessed with complete felicity, arising from the presence of God *dwelling with them*, and will experience no more sorrow nor any other misery, v. 4. *God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away. And he that sat on the throne*, God, *said: Behold, I make all things new.* The prophet Isaiah had said nearly the same things: *The Lord*, says he, *shall cast death down headlong for ever: and the Lord God shall wipe away tears from every face*, xxv. 8. And, *Behold*, says God by the same prophet, *I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former things shall not be in remembrance, and they shall not come upon the heart. But you should be glad and rejoice for ever in these things, which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem, a rejoicing, and the people thereof joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people, and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying*, lxv. 17, &c. The Almighty *makes all things new* to these blessed beings, a new Jerusalem or seat of bliss, a new state of existence quite different from what it had been in this world: all is now happiness, glory, and exultation.—— St. John proceeds,

V. 5. *And he said to me: Write, for these words are most faithful and true.* Here is the sanction of the Almighty. He gives testimony to the *truth* of what has been said of the happiness and glory of the Jewish and

Patriarchal Church in Heaven, and he professes to be *faithful* in the execution of these promises.

V. 6. *And he said to me: It is done. I am Alpha and Omega: the beginning and the end.* The Almighty again speaks, and says: *It is done;* time is past, and eternity is begun. *I am Alpha and Omega: the beginning and the end:* I framed the universe, I destroyed it, and renewed it at my pleasure: All mankind received their existence from me, and they ultimately return to me to be rewarded or punished: I called the Patriarchs and I chose the Jews; I was their God and of all the just of those ages, and I shall be their God and reward for all eternity.—The Almighty proceeds,

V. 6. *To him that thirsteth I will give of the fountain of the water of life, freely.*

V. 7. *He that shall overcome, shall possess these things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son.*

To those that shall have *thirsted*, says God, after the *water of life*, after heavenly beatitude, and endeavoured to deserve it, I will give it; and my gift will be *free* or gratuitous, because human merit can never equal the reward which I bestow, nor is there any human merit without the concurrence of my grace.

I shall give them plentifully to drink of this water of life, by replenishing them with that abundance of sweet satisfaction, which surpasses all conception. *They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy house*, says the Psalmist; *and thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of thy pleasure*, Psalm xxxv. 9. And whoever shall have *overcome*, v. 7, that is, whoever shall have courageously fought in the cause of religion, or shall have preserved himself free from idolatry, injustice, and works of iniquity, and shall have walked in the observance of my precepts, he shall inhabit this city, this mansion of immortality, and shall possess for ever the ineffable blessings of felicity that abound in it, *and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son.* Such will be the happy state of the courageous and zealous servants of God.

V. 8. *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcer-*

ers, and idolaters, and all liars, they shall have their portion in the pool burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

The account being here concluded of the future state of that part of mankind, which preceded the age of Christianity, we are now invited to a new spectacle.

V. 9. *And there came one of the seven Angels, who had the Vials full of the seven last plagues, and spoke with me, saying: Come, and I will shew thee the bride, the wife of the Lamb.*

V. 10. *And he took me up in spirit to a great and high mountain: and he shewed me the holy city Jerusalem* coming down out of Heaven from God.*

V. 11. *Having the glory of God: and the light thereof was like to a precious stone, as to the jasper-stone, even as crystal.*

Here we are favoured with a sight of the heavenly Jerusalem, or seat of bliss of the Christian saints. The ground of this distinction of two Jerusalems appears, not only from the prophet's invariable rule of not repeating the same thing, but also from their respective descriptions. The first, which we saw above, agrees with the nature and terms of the covenant of God with mankind relatively to the ages before the æra of Christianity; and this latter Jerusalem is particularly distinguished by being styled the *bride and wife of the Lamb*, which evidently characterizes the Christian Church. The view of this seat of heavenly beatitude is offered to St. John by *one of the seven Angels who had the vials full of the seven last plagues*, it being fit that the rewards of the just should be proclaimed by the same Angels who before had poured the Vials of divine punishments on the wicked. These Vials appertain solely to the Christian Church. St. John is ravished *in spirit* to the top of a *great and high mountain*, to be enabled to see over the high wall into this *great city, the Holy Jerusalem* of the Christian saints, which he sees *coming down out of Heaven from* God, to fix upon the earth. It is filled with the brightness of the glory of God; and

* In the Greek text, the great city, the holy Jerusalem.

its *light* is as shining as the lustre of the finest *precious stone*, and as agreeable to the eye as the view of the most transparent green *jasper-stone*.

V. 12. *And it had a wall great and high, having twelve gates, and in the gates twelve Angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the Children of Israel.*

V. 13. *On the east, three gates; and on the north, three gates; and on the south, three gates; and on the west, three gates.*

This heavenly city is surrounded with a *great and high wall*, and has *twelve gates*, three to the *east*, as many to the *west*, to the *north*, and to the *south*. They are guarded by *twelve Angels* in the same manner as an Angel was appointed to guard the gate of the terrestrial paradise: and upon each gate is inscribed the *name* of one of the *twelve tribes of the children of Israel*, because from them the Christian Church was first formed, and thus they became the leaders or gate of entrance to all succeeding Christians.

V. 14. *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the twelve names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.* The *wall* stands on *twelve foundations* raised one upon another, on which are severally inscribed the *names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb*; they being, after Christ, the foundations of his Church.

V. 15. *And he that spoke with me, had a measure of a reed, of gold, to measure the city and the gates thereof, and the wall.*

V. 16. *And the city lieth in a four-square, and the length thereof is as great as the breadth: and he measured the city with a golden reed for twelve thousand furlongs: and the length, and the height, and the breadth thereof are equal.*

V. 17. *And he measured the wall thereof an hundred forty four cubits, the measure of a man which is of an Angel.*

The Angel who shows and explains these things to St. John, *measures* with a golden rod the city, its walls and gates, and finds the plan of the city to be an exact *square*, and its whole circuit to be twelve thousand fur-

longs, or fifteen hundred miles. The wall of each side of this square is therefore three thousand furlongs, or three hundred and seventy-five miles long; and, what is strange, its height is said to be equal to its length; so that the whole fabric of the city forms an exact cube, the *length, breadth, and height* of which are, each severally, three hundred and seventy-five miles. What a prodigious city! but, *In my Father's house*, says our Saviour, *there are many mansions*, John xiv. 2. Such an extensive habitation, we hope, indicates the vast multitude that will be of Christian citizens. The angel likewise *measures* the thickness of the *wall*, v. 17, and finds it to be *an hundred and forty four cubits*, or two hundred and sixteen feet; a cubit being the measure from the elbow to the extremity of the hand of an ordinary *man*, or a foot and a half nearly, which is the *measure* used by the *angel*.

V. 18. *And the building of the wall thereof was of jasper-stone; but the city itself pure gold, like to clear glass.* St. John having described the dimensions of this great city, the basis of which being a square, and the structure a cube, form the most elegant and most perfect figure of an edifice; he now proceeds to give us an account of the materials of which the whole is built, which are the richest that can be imagined. The *wall* is built of fine green *jasper-stone*, the colour best suited to the eye. The *city itself*, by which we suppose are meant the buildings of the city, is constructed wholly of *pure gold* as transparent as crystal.

V. 19. *And the foundations of the wall of the city, were adorned with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper: the second, sapphire: the third, a chalcedony: the fourth, an emerald:*

V. 20. *The fifth, sardonix: the sixth, sardius: the seventh, chrysolite: the eighth, beryl: the ninth, a topaz: the tenth, a chrysoprasus: the eleventh, a jacinth: the twelfth, an amethyst.* The twelve *foundations* that support the wall of the city, are *adorned* with the most shining and most beautiful *precious stones*, which are here particularly specified. As the names of the twelve apostles are inscribed upon them, v. 14, perhaps the qualities of

each stone bear some relation to the peculiar endowments of the apostle whose name is upon it; but this relation we cannot pretend to discover.

V. 21. *And the twelve gates are twelve pearls, one to each: and every several gate was of one several pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.* The *twelve gates* of the city in their jambs and external structure and decorations are made of so many beautiful *pearls*, a pearl for each gate: and the door of *each gate* is formed of *one* single *pearl*. And the *streets* and whole area of the city are paved with *pure gold* transparent as crystal. What can be more rich, splendid, or sumptuous?

V. 22. *And I saw no temple therein. For the Lord God Almighty is the temple thereof, and the Lamb.*

V. 23. *And the city has no need of the sun, nor of the moon, to shine in it. For the glory of God hath enlightened it, and the Lamb is the lamp thereof.* This heavenly city wants no *temple: Almighty God and the Lamb* residing in it supply the place of a temple; they are always present to the blessed inhabitants, who thus see their God and Saviour face to face, and offer their homage immediately to them. Nor is there any occasion for the light of the *sun* or *moon:* the city is always illuminated by the resplendent *glory* and brightness of the Deity which serve in the place of the sun, and the *Lamb* himself is the great luminary of it, in lieu of the moon. The same glorious perfections of this city are also painted to us in the same colours by the prophet Isaiah: *Thou shalt no more have the sun for thy light by day, neither shall the brightness of the moon enlighten thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee for an everlasting light, and thy God for thy glory*, lx. 19.

V. 24. *And the nations* shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honour into it.* The citizens who shall enjoy these blessings, will be selected from all the *nations* that have espoused the Christian law. And the kings of the earth who have truly served Christ the King of kings, shall

* In the Greek text, *the nations of these that are saved.*

there offer their homage to the Almighty and to the Lamb, and lay their crowns and honours at the foot of the throne.

V. 25. *And the gates thereof shall not be shut by day: for there shall be no night there.*

V. 26. *And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.* The *gates* of the city will always be open, as it can suffer no danger from enemies, nor any disturbance. Nor will there be ever the least obscurity or darkness, its light, which proceeds from God and the Lamb, remaining always equally intense and inextinguishable. Some of all ranks and conditions, out of all the *nations* of the earth, will there be found offering to the Supreme Deity their *glory and honour*, that is, their riches, their dignities, or whatever blessings they have been possessed of in life. The same glorious things we hear from the mouth of that ancient prophet, who always spoke with rapture of Christ and his kingdom: *Thy gates shall be open continually: they shall not be shut day nor night, that the strength of the Gentiles may be brought to thee, and their kings may be brought*, Isa. lx. 11.

V. 27. *There shall not enter into it any thing defiled, or that worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they that are written in the book of life of the Lamb.* Such is the holiness of the place, that nothing *defiled*, unclean, nothing stained with the *abomination* of idolatry, injustice, *lying*, or imposture, or any other species of iniquity, can enter there. It is a mansion of bliss, for those only whose names *are written in the book of life of the Lamb*, that is for those only who have been called and chosen by the *Lamb*, and whom he has registered in his *book*. Such expressions repeatedly prove that the city here described is the Christian Jerusalem.

Chap. xxii. v. 1. *And he shewed me a river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.*

V. 2. *In the midst of the street thereof, and on both sides of the river, was the tree of life, bearing twelve fruits, yielding its fruits every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

Through this celestial abode runs a *river of water of life, clear as crystal*, which rises from the foot of the *throne of God and the Lamb*. On the banks of this river, as it runs through the *middle of the streets*, grows the *tree of life*, bearing *twelve* different sorts of *fruit* which ripen *every month*; the food of which nourishes the inhabitants, preserves their bodies from all tendency to corruption, and keeps them in full vigour and strength without the least impair for all eternity. The *leaves* even have the virtue of *healing*, or of securing the body against the least attack of sickness or disease. An emblem of this was the tree of life in Paradise. With such *fruit* and such *water* the heavenly citizens eat and drink immortality.

V. 3. *And there shall be no curse any more: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him.*

V. 4. *And they shall see his face: and his name shall be on their foreheads.* In this blissful habitation there will be *no curse*, there will be no danger of experiencing the anger of God or his punishments. *He and the Lamb* will fix their *throne* in the midst of them, to gratify them for ever with their amiable presence; while they with boundless affection will offer their praise and thanksgiving. Thus will the saints see their God *face to face*, and enjoy the possession of him with inexpressible and never-ceasing joy. And they will bear on their foreheads *his name*, that is, the names of *God* and the *Lamb* expressed in one name, as both are one God: and thus they will carry an honourable and distinctive mark of their having been the devoted servants of God and the Lamb.—We may observe, that in this and other places of the Apocalypse, where St. John names together God and the Lamb, he always proceeds to speak of them in the singular number, to show the unity of Godhead.

V. 5. *And night shall be no more: and they shall not need the light of the lamp, nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall enlighten them, and they shall reign for ever and ever.* We saw above, xxi. 23 and 25, nearly the same things applied to the city, which are here promis-

ed to the inhabitants, who will never more be troubled with the vicissitude of *day* and *night*, but will be cheered with perpetual day. Nor will they want a *sun*, a *lamp*, or any other created light; because the Almighty himself will *enlighten them* with the glory and lustre of his divinity, and they will *reign* with him in an ocean of happiness *for ever and ever*.

Thus we have seen a full description of the heavenly Jerusalem, that is, of the triumphant state of the Christian Church, which when once begun will last for evermore. The saints here will be filled with all those gratifications that can sooth and make happy the soul and body. Both these component parts of the human individual, as they concurred to advance the glory of God in the world, so they will have both their respective objects of delight and happiness. But it must here be observed that, though our explication has been mostly literal, we cannot pretend to determine how far the prophet's glorious description of the heavenly city is to be understood in the literal, how far in the allegorical sense. We are certain that the happiness of the saints will be complete, but it is not allowed to man to investigate the particulars of that future state; for *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him*, 1 Cor. ii. 9.——To return to the text, St. John says,

V. 6. *And he said to me: these words are most faithful and true.* Here is the seal put to the whole preceding account of the heavenly Jerusalem: the angel gives testimony, that it is *most faithful and true*, or that it will certainly take place, as God's word and promise cannot fail. This conclusion is always subjoined to those parts of the prophecy, which treat of the ultimate state of man, namely, a happy eternity. Then is added,

V. 6. *And the Lord God of the spirits of the prophets sent his angel to shew his servants the things which must be done shortly.* That is, God, who inspires the prophets or is the author of all prophecy, has vouchsafed to *send his angel*, St. John the Baptist, to signify the preceding prophecy of the Apocalypse to *his servants*, agreeably to what was notified in the very beginning of

:. 1. v. 1. Here then seems to terminate the pro-
itical history of the Christian Church. We have
n her described, in her rise, in her progress, and in
principal events that related to her. The whole
rse of her existence and transactions was aptly di-
ed into seven ages, the last of which shows her
mphing in Heaven, and crowned with immortal
ry.

CHAPTER XIV.

Conclusion of the Apocalypse.

THE remaining part of the Apocalypse contains several useful admonitions which claim our attention, and with them the Book concludes.

Apoc. chap. xxii. v. 7. *Behold I come quickly, Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book.* Here Christ himself speaks: *Behold I come quickly*, to execute the things delivered in this prophecy: therefore *blessed is he who keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book*, or who attends to what is contained in this book, and takes warning and instruction from the important events therein described. The same admonition had been given at the beginning, c. 1. v. 3, a repeated argument of the extraordinary usefulness of this book.

V. 8. *And I John, who have heard and seen these things.* Here St. John speaks: *I John* am the person that *heard and saw* all *these things*; by which declaration he gives testimony of having received from the angel the whole preceding prophecy. And then he proceeds,

V. 8. *And after I had heard and seen, I fell down to adore before the feet of the angel, who shewed me these things:*

V. 9. *And he said to me: see thou do not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them that keep the words of the prophecy of this book. Adore God.* St. John offers, as he had done before, xix. 10, his homage of gratitude to the *angel*, St. John Baptist, who had *shewn him these things*. The angel refuses it, and tells him to offer his adoration and thanks to

God, who is the author and giver of this prophecy. The angel furthermore plainly insinuates, that he has no title to the apostle's thanks. nor is of a nature superior to the apostle; for he tells him, he is his *fellow-servant*, having been formerly so on earth; and, the *fellow-servant of his brethren the prophets*, that is, of the ministers of Christ's Church; and, *fellow-servant of them that keep the words of the prophecy of this book*, that is, of all the faithful Christians from the beginning of Christ's Church to the end of time.

V. 10. *And he saith to me: seal not the words of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.* The angel, or perhaps Christ, says to St. John: *seal not the words of the prophecy of this book;* leave the book open, that every one may read it, and be informed of the contents; because *the time is at hand* for their accomplishment to begin, or which is already begun, and which will continue successively, till the whole be completed.

V. 11. *He that hurteth, let him hurt still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is just, let him be justified still: and he that is holy, let him be sanctified still.* That is, the unjust and the wicked, who are obstinately so, may make haste, says Christ, to complete their injustice and iniquity: and the just and the holy should endeavour to hasten their steps in sanctifying and perfecting themselves more; for,

V. 12. *Behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to every man according to his works.* Behold, I shall soon summon them by the writ of death, to appear before me, says Christ, and shall reward these according to their merits; and those, the impious, I shall punish in the rigour of justice according to the measure of their iniquity. Let us then be prepared for the summons.

V. 13. *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.* Christ here attributes to himself the same divine qualities, which were assumed by Almighty God, Chap. xxi. v. 6. *I am*, says Christ, *the beginning and the end.* I existed from all eternity and shall exist to all eternity. I am the creator of the universe, the conservator of it, and shall put an end to it.

I am the first and the last, as he had before said, Chap. i. v. 17. I am prior to all mankind, they die and return to dust, but I am living for ever and ever. I am the *first* founder of the new Church on earth, and I shall be the *last* and eternal reward of the same.

V. 14. *Blessed are they that wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb*: that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city.*

V. 15. *Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and unchaste, and murderers, and servers of idols, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie.* Christ continues to speak, and pronounces *Blessed* those Christians that *wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb* by suffering martyrdom, or by preserving themselves clean from the filth of sin, and by the observance of his commands. These will be entitled to be admitted through *the gates into the city*, that is, into the mansions of Christian heavenly Jerusalem; where they will *have a right to the tree of life*, to eat the fruit of immortality. But all those others will be excluded from this heavenly *city*, who, after the nature of snarling *dogs*, calumniate and slander their neighbour; also all *sorcerers*, *unchaste*, *murderers*, *idolaters*, and those that *love and make lies*, or impostors and teachers of false doctrine.

V 16. *I Jesus have sent my Angel, to testify to you these things in the churches* Jesus Christ here speaks and says: *I have sent my Angel*, John the Baptist, to deliver to you, John the Apostle, this my Revelation, and to give *testimony* to it; that you may transmit it in an authentic manner to the seven *churches* of Asia, and they to others.—Christ continues,

V. 16. *I am the root and stock of David, the bright and morning star.* I am the *root* and *stock* or stem that spring from *David:* I am that Son of David, of whom it was said: *The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his Father, and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end*, Luke i. 32, 33. To me then were decreed all power and dominion: and from me flow the divine

* In the Greek, that observe his commandments.

blessings to all nations, both of redemption and future immortality. These are my rights. I am also *the bright and morning star;* the true morning star that shines so bright above all other stars, and *that enlighteneth every man that comes into the world*, John i. 9. I am that *star, the Orient, that enlighteneth them who sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death*, Luke i. 78, 79. I am the *bright morning star*, that guides mankind to the gate of Heaven. *I am the way, the truth, and the life*, John xiv. 6.——Christ continues,

V. 17. *And the Spirit and the bride say: Come. And he that heareth, let him say: Come. And he that thirsteth, let him come: and he that will, let him take the water of life freely.* The *Spirit* or Holy Ghost, who directs the Church, and the *Bride* of Christ or the Church herself, cry to me, saying: *Come*, hasten the general judgment, put an end to the labours of your servants, and admit them into the heavenly city. Whoever *heareth* this cry of the Holy Spirit and the Church, *let him* also *say: Come;* let every one join in the same request, because it is for the ultimate and greatest blessing. And if any one *thirsteth* after *the water of life*, after the glory which I give, *let him come* and meet me, let him hasten to me in fervour and sanctity. And *he that will, let him take the water of life freely;* he that desires to drink of *the water of life*, and will take the pains to come at it, may have it *freely* or gratis, without money, without any other price but faith and good works, both which proceed from the gratuitous gift of my grace: for *without me you can do nothing*, John xv. 5: When I crown your merits, I crown my own gifts.—The same invitation to eternal beatitude, which alone will satisfy all our desires, Almighty God formerly gave by his prophet Isaiah: *All you that thirst, come to the waters: and you that have no money, make haste, buy, and eat: come ye, buy wine and milk without money, and without any price*, lv. 1.

V. 18. *For I testify to every one that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book: If any man shall add to these things, God shall add unto him the plagues written in this book.*

V. 19. *And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from these things that are written in this book.* Christ had said just before, v. 16, that he had sent his Angel to give testimony to this prophecy; and therefore he here denounces a severe punishment upon all those who shall presume to add any thing to, or detract from, this Prophecy of the Apocalypse. Hence it appears, with what respect and caution it ought to be read and handled. And indeed whoever hast studied the Apocalypse with attention, must have observed the precision of it to be such, that a word cannot be added or retrenched without danger of derogating from the sense.

V. 20. *He that gives testimony of these things, saith: Surely, I come quickly: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.* Christ here *gives testimony of these things*, that is, he bears witness and gives his sanction to all that is written in this Prophecy; and then concluding, proclaims for the third time: *Surely, I come quickly.* I shall certainly come soon, for good and all, to judge the whole body of mankind at the last day, and to recompense the just and punish the wicked. St. John answers his divine Master: Be it so, *O Lord Jesus; come*, and grant us, your servants, the favour of enjoying you for all eternity.

CHAPTER XV.

Reflections on the seven Ages of the Christian Church.

THUS have we taken a view of the whole prophetic history of the Apocalypse. We have travelled through the whole tract of duration, which reaches from the rise of Christianity to the fixed state of eternity, after the close of all time. We have seen the most remarkable transactions that take place in the Christian Church during that whole period. And thus we are arrived at last to enjoy a full view of the plan of œconomy which Christ, the supreme governor, observes in the administration of his Church. This plan appears truly grand and admirable. It consists of three parts, contained under the seals, the trumpets, and the vials. The trumpets exhibit to us the painful trials he thinks fit to subject his people to. The vials describe the punishments which he inflicts on their enemies. The nature, therefore, of both these parts of his conduct towards his Church, is sufficiently clear: but that of the seals, it must be allowed, is not so obvious, and may require some elucidation. In the prelude to the seals the *Lamb* was introduced, all power was given him, the period of his sovereignty was opened, and his reign commenced. This clue leads us to the understanding of the general tendency of the seals. In them we see Christ proceed to the work of forming and establishing his kingdom or Church, which he carries on through all ages. But as every prince who undertakes to conquer to himself a new kingdom, must necessarily encounter many enemies and obstacles, so here we see enemies rise up against Christ, the prince of the Christian kingdom, and oppose his undertaking. Thus, in the first seal, Christ sets out upon his conquests to form his kingdom upon

earth. The second seal shows us the rise of a body of heretics, the Arians, Christ's own subjects, who rebel against him, and attempt to wrest from him part of his kingdom. The third seal opens to us the scene of the subversion of pagan Rome, with its empire, which is the triumph of Christ over that mighty idolatrous power, and the establishment of his kingdom in its place. In the fourth seal we see again the rise of another powerful enemy of Christ, namely, the Mahometan or Antichristian empire, which deprives him of some part of his dominions for a time. The fifth seal exhibits to us the martyrs of the fifth age, who are told that vengeance will in due time be taken on their persecutors, for the spilling of their blood: and in the mean time they are clothed with the robe of beatitude. This shows Christ's œconomy with regard to these, his faithful and valiant soldiers. Under the sixth seal we see dreadful prodigies and signs, and the heavens and the earth in confusion. By these, Christ, the bountiful king, alarms the impious and rebellious part of his people, and tries by terror to bring them back to their allegiance and duty, and to reform them into good subjects before he comes to judge them. The seventh seal opens the scene in which he completes his work, by taking possession of the whole earth, and putting an end to all other power. In consequence of this he is acknowledged universal Lord and master of the world, and receives the applauses and acclamations of the heavenly choirs, who sing: *The Kingdom of this world is become our Lord's and his Christ's, and he shall reign for ever and ever*, Apoc. xi. 15. Thus then we see described in the seals, the series of Christ's operations for the formation and establishment of that kingdom which was promised him upon earth. *I beheld*, says Daniel, *and lo, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and he came even to the Ancient of days: and they presented him before him. And he gave him power, and glory, and a kingdom: and all people, tribes, and tongues, shall serve him: his power is an everlasting power, that shall not be taken away: and his kingdom, that shall not be destroyed*, vii. 13, 14. Such, in fine, is the abstract of the history that is writ-

ten in detail in the book sealed with seven seals, where this new powerful king, the Son of man, had laid down before hand, the whole plan of the work he designed to carry on during all future ages.

Here it may be further proper to remark, that the prophecies contained under the seals, are delivered in natural historical language; whereas those under the trumpets and vials are expressed in allegories: the reason of which seems to be, that as the seals exhibit to us the abstract of a history contained in the book sealed with seven seals, this abstract must be supposed to be written in the same natural historical style as the full history itself. The style of the trumpets is allegorical, because, as the trumpets sound alarms, troubles, and persecutions to the Church, a previous general notion of them would be useful, and at the same time sufficient; and such is conveyed to us by obscure allegory: but a clear and minute detail of those calamities would naturally terrify and make too much impression upon the mind. Likewise, if the punishments announced by the vials were clearly and fully expressed, such might be the malice and perversity of some among the guilty part of mankind, as to attempt to frustrate the decrees of God, and oppose their execution. Such punishments, therefore, are purposely covered with the veil of allegory, the meaning of which remains more or less uncertain.

In fine, such a compass of knowledge imparted to us through the channel of the Apocalypse, ought to inspire us with the warmest sense of gratitude for so signal a favour, and should be a powerful motive for making good use of it. We see laid open to us the course of the dispensations of God towards man: and what subject can furnish us with more useful instructions for admiring the bounty of this Sovereign administrator, for contemplating his wisdom, and dreading his justice? To promote this sort of consideration, we shall here subjoin a few reflections upon each of the seven ages, and we advise the reader to add of his own to them.

I.

IN the first age of the Christian Church, which comprehended little more than the space of three hundred years, we saw the gospel preached to the greatest part of the known world, notwithstanding all the opposition that earth and hell could contrive against it. The divine power shone in its full lustre, and confounded all the enemies of religion. Miracles were so frequent, that every day was distinguished by some illustrious marks of supernatural interposition. The meridian sun could not appear clearer and brighter than the divine power operating in favour of the new promulgated doctrine. In this manner Christ builded his Church on such a firm foundation, as nothing could ever shake, and he established his religion by such incontestible proofs as no pretences could invalidate.

But the sanction of the Christian religion was not only divine and irrefragable, its influence on the minds of its professors was altogether astonishing. It inspired them with such firmness of fortitude, that they were ready on all occasions to shed their blood in defence of it. When put to the trial, they resigned all temporal advantages, they were deaf to all entreaties and offers, they viewed without emotion the racks and cruellest torments, and bowed down their heads with joy to the executioner. Such was the behaviour of not a few only, but of prodigious numbers. As Adam had first yielded to sin through want of courage, and infinite prejudice had ensued upon all his posterity, it would seem that Almighty God designed that fault should be retrieved, as far as possible to human nature, by the eminent fortitude of his new servants, the Christians; whom for that purpose he made pass through most severe persecutions, the acutest tortures, and death itself in its most dreadful shapes. Thus the earth was bathed with Christian blood, but the souls of the generous victims went to share immortal glory and power with

the Lamb: *And I saw seats*, says St. John, *and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them, and the souls of them that were beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years*, Apoc. xx. 4. The spirit of the Christian doctrine was no less manifest in those that were left on the stage of life. They appeared by the sanctity of their conduct to form a new community entirely different from the rest of mankind, and they practised such transcendent virtues as before were deemed impossible. Some entered into courses of the severest austerities, of mortification and fasting. Others retired into remote solitudes, consecrating their whole time to God, with little or no allowance to nature; spending days, weeks, and years, in contemplating the perfections of the Supreme Being, in meditating on his bountiful dispensations to mankind, and in aspiring after that state of bliss which they hoped to succeed to after the present life. Thus the infancy of the Church was decorated with all the highest ornaments of religion. This was the age of Christian perfection: and Christ set up the most eminent models of all the virtues human nature is capable of, that he might make appear to the world the power of his grace, the excellence of his doctrine, and that all future ages might have before their eyes perfect examples for their encouragement and imitation.

On another hand it is necessary to observe, that if such be the all-wise œconomy of the Almighty, to put the fidelity of many of his servants to the test, by conducting them through the fiery trials of persecution, he nevertheless views with detestation the hands that inflict those severities on them. The persecutions crown the faith and fortitude of the sufferers. But the persecutors are guilty of malice and cruelty, and in consequence draw the divine vengeance upon them. And thus it happened to the heathen Roman emperors and people, who for spilling the Christian blood, felt, as we have seen, the weight of God's judgments. Many examples likewise of this sort in prior ages are recorded in holy writ. Among others, Sennacherib, the Assyri-

an king; Nabuchodonosor the Babylonian, and Antiochus the Syrian, were punished by the hand of God, for their malicious attempts and inhumanities, against his people, the Jews. The course of his Providence we see is the same under the Christian dispensation. For from the Apocalypse we learn that seven vials of the wrath of God are poured out for the punishment of the enemies of the Christian Church. Ought not this reflection be sufficient to deter the evil-minded from directing their malice and power against the people of that community?

II.

IN the second Age of the Church, which begins about the year 320, and contains nearly 100 years, we see rise up a scene of a different kind. This age may be styled the age of heresy. In the preceding period we saw a strenuous contest, between religion and idolatry, between Christianity and paganism, or as one may say, between the Almighty and satan, whether should claim the worship of mankind. The Almighty having vanquished his enemy, and exploded idolatry by the preaching of the Christian religion, and establishing the adoration of the one supreme Deity; Satan, to pursue the dictates of his unrelenting malice, shifts his ground, and renews his stratagems, still to defraud the Almighty of his right, and to rob him, if possible, of his favourite creature, man. For that purpose, the infernal fiend by his wiles, prevails upon an ambitious man to renounce his allegiance to Christ, and submission to Christ's Church. Arius is inspired by that spirit of falsehood, with sentiments wholly incompatible with the divine nature and perfections of the Son of God, and by divulging those sentiments, he sows the seeds of rebellion and heresy. Though some heretical principles had been set forth in the preceding age, yet they had been confined to narrow limits of place, and to a small number of abettors; but now they show themselves with open effrontery, they seize whole cities, provinces, and kingdoms. They are espoused by kings, empe-

rors, and bishops. The malignant spirit of heresy, raises dissention and animosity among the Christians, the church is laid waste by her own children, and the seamless garment of Christ is torn in pieces. The flame of division blazes so high, that Christians do not fear to seize the sword, and destroy one another. And what is the utmost misfortune, great numbers are seduced into the snare of eternal perdition. For, as no one escaped perishing in the deluge, who was not in Noe's ark, as St. Cyprian remarks, lib. de Unit. Eccl.; so no one can hope to be of the company of the saints, who separates himself from the unity of the Church.

The rise of Arianism is therefore the second general alarm which Christ sounds to his Church, to try the fidelity of his people, and to give occasion of meriting a reward to those who remain staunch in their faith, and continue firm in fighting under his standard. The crown of immortal glory and happiness is of too high a value to be wholly a gratuitous gift. We must purchase it by labour, by suffering, by maintaining our fortitude and constancy in the different trials sent us by Providence. No one will be crowned but he that has fought well.

If on one hand Christ is faithful to his promises in rewarding his servants, on the other those escape not his indignation, whether heretics or idolators, that seduce his people by false doctrine, or lay waste his fold by the sword of persecution. Thus the Arians, the strongest body of heretics that ever assaulted the Church, sunk in proportion to their former power, even so as to vanish from the face of the earth. In a period of about 340 years from their first appearance, they were no more to be found. This and the other examples of Divine judgments, which the Vials discover to us, make a convincing proof, that no nation, no collective body of people, ever rebel against the Church, or persecute it, with impunity. The Divine vindictive hand in due time overtakes them, and forces them to acknowledge from their own sad experience, that Christ is the faithful protector of his church, and the certain scourge of her enemies.

III.

THE third Age, which commences about the year 406, and contains 220 years nearly, is remarkable for the judgments of God upon ancient Rome and the western empire. The Almighty, who is the Creator of the universe, and sole Lord of all, necessarily claims all homage from his creatures, nor can he suffer that greatest of all impieties, the transferring to any other being the honour that is due to himself alone. Rome had sacrilegiously employed its great power for the support of idolatry; it had also opposed with its whole might the establishment of Christ's kingdom, and had most inhumanly persecuted his servants, and shed the innocent blood of an infinite number of them. The Almighty, after such enormous provocations, at length rises up in his wrath, and pours down the whole torrent of it upon that guilty empire. He had before, as we have seen, struck those emperors, who had notoriously pursued the same impious and audacious courses. But now the sovereign punisher of iniquity sends out against the whole empire of Rome, a multitude of barbarous people, who pour in upon it like fierce tigers, tear it to pieces, destroy its inhabitants, and demolish its cities, with Rome itself. But why should we wonder at this striking instance of Divine vengeance, while we see the same plan of œconomy followed in the preceding ages? Do we not read in the written word of God, that a similar fate had attended the empires and cities of Ninive and Babylon? Were not Tyre and Sidon devoted in the same manner to destruction? Was not the opulent and populous kingdom of Egypt overturned and enslaved? These kingdoms, cities, and several others, owed their ruin to an angry God, who would suffer no longer their pride, idolatry, and wickedness. *Behold the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the face of the earth.* Amos ix. 8. Nay, even he would not spare his chosen land and beloved seat of Jerusalem. When his people had renounced their fidelity to him, and adopted strange Gods in his place, he sent upon them a scourge,

Nabuchodonosor, the Babylonian king, who ravaged the country, levelled the city and temple with the ground, destroyed by famine, fire, and sword, a great part of the inhabitants, and the rest he carried into captivity. When the Jews by their repentance, had recovered their favour with God, and in consequence, their land and city, we see again, upon their new rebellion, and the most grievous of all iniquities, in putting to death their Messiah and Saviour, the wrath of God inflamed to such a degree, as to devote to destruction a prodigious multitude of them by the severest scourges that can be inflicted on mankind. Their city was also entirely demolished, and the remainder of the people expelled from their country, dispersed over the whole face of the earth, exposed as an object of derision to the rest of mankind, and continue to this day a lasting monument of the divine indignation.

That the same course of Divine Providence in punishing wicked nations is still pursued, we learn clearly from the Apocalypse. Hence then appears, how necessary is the principle of the fear of God, and how essential it is to man to revere the Sovereign Deity, and respect his commands. Should not these considerations impress a check on the proceedings of princes in the administration of their governments? If the sovereign King of heaven and earth is not invited to share in their councils, but if politic views direct wholly their steps, without regard to equity, or if ambition, resentment, or any other passion, wholly sway their conduct, what injustices, what crimes, may not be the result, in the guilt of which their whole states become generally involved? Then what is the consequence? Such national deviation from the law of God, certainly provokes the divine vengeance, as appears from what has been said, and is the cause of the dreadful disasters that sooner or later befal those states, and often terminate in their utter ruin. How much would it be the interest of princes to attend to the admonition of the great and wise king David! *And now, O ye kings, understand: receive instruction, you that judge the earth. Serve ye the Lord with fear,*

and rejoice unto him with trembling. Embrace discipline, lest the Lord become angry. Psalm ii. 10, &c.

IV.

THE fourth age comprehends a period of nine centuries, from about the year 620 to 1520. But if the length of this exceeds that of the preceding importance of three different successive events; the rise of Mahomet and Mahometan empire distinguishes the first part of this period We are astonished at the success of that great impostor, and at the progress his successors have made in conquering the world. It is likewise a subject of surprise, that Christ, who is the *Prince of the kings of the earth*, Apoc. 1. 5, should suffer such an enemy to rise up, to establish a doctrine quite opposite to that he himself had taught, and to re-introduce *death* into the world, by exploding the very source of salvation, the redemption from sin. But our surprise will abate, when we consider, that those nations, which adopted this Antichristian religion, had made themselves in great measure deservedly obnoxious to so dreadful a judgment. The Christian countries of Asia, and Africa, and some eastern provinces in Europe, had been guilty of manifold inconstancy and perfidy, in relinquishing the true faith to espouse the heretical and schismatical doctrines of Arius, Macedonius, Donatus, Nestorius, Eutychee, Pelagius, Photius, &c.; while the most part of Western Christendom remained firm in their adherence to the unity of faith. What wonder then, if Almighty God suffered the Orientals to run into a precipice, who had already voluntarily left the path of truth?

The second interesting event that distinguishes this age, is a dismal alarm sounded to the Church, namely, the defection of the Greeks from the faith, which, like a *great earthquake*, shook the continent of Christendom, and severed a great number of fair eastern Churches from the body of the faithful. Pride, ambition, jealousy, fondness of novelty, or such like vicious dispositions, are the general origin of heresies and schisms. The Orientals suffered themselves to be

guided by such passions, and in consequence they bewildered themselves in error, and withdrew from the communion of their Catholic brethren. Rebellion often grows contumacious; and effectually they aggravated highly their guilt, by obstinately rejecting all means offered them for their reconciliation with God and his Church. Such a grievous and lasting provocation armed the avenging hand of God, which made use of the Mahometans as a scourge to punish them. This punishment, which proved very severe, was the third momentous transaction that characterized the fourth age.

And may we not here bewail the misfortune and stubborn blindness of the present Greeks, who, though so fully admonished by the punishment of their forefathers under which they themselves lie groaning, yet remain hardened and inflexible? But, what indeed is highly deplorable, our Christian Prophet had said of them: *They did not penance to give God glory*—See the fourth Vial. Christ, who essentially loves concord and union, commanded the same to be observed among his followers, and in that view addressed his heavenly Father by a special prayer. *Not for them only do I pray*, said he, *but for them also who through their word shall believe in me: that they may be one, as thou*, Father, *in me, and I in thee: that they also may be one in us*, John xvii. 20, 21. To fix this necessary union, and make it stable, he established the centre of it in one person, the person of St. Peter and each of his successors. *Thou art Peter*, (that is, *a rock,*) said our Saviour, *and upon this rock I will build my Church*, Mat. xvi. 18. He told St. Peter again on another occasion: *I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not: and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren*, Luke xxii. 32. Here then is the centre, with which the whole circle of the Church must be linked and connected by the bond of union and faith. Whoever breaks this chain, dissolves as much as in him lies the work of Christ, and disunites himself from the society of his brethren. Such has been the crime of the Greeks, who, renouncing communion with the successor of St. Peter, have

set up in his room one of their own bishops, equally schismatical with themselves. "Christ has builded his "Church," says St. Cyprian, "upon one, who is Pe- "ter: and has placed one chair. He has indeed given "to all bishops the full participation of power equally "to govern their flocks, all deriving their authority "from Christ: but the beginning arises from unity in "Peter." De Unit. Eccl. The breaking of this tie of "Unity in Peter," was the occasion of the heavy disasters that have fallen upon the Greeks, and which they continue to labour under at this day. And is there not further reason to apprehend, that their oppressions will not be alleviated, if not even made heavier, as long as they return not to what they so criminally abandoned, the centre of unity in Peter? This indeed they found clearly predicted in the Revelations of St. Bridget, who died in the year 1373. But as to what degree of authority and credit these Revelations may claim, we shall say nothing ourselves, but refer the reader to the learned Cardinal Lambertini, afterwards Pope Benedict XIV. who writes thus: "Though an assent of Catho- "lic faith be not due to such Revelations, they deserve "an human assent, according to the rules of prudence, "by which they are probable and piously credible, as "the Revelations of B. Hildegardis, St. Bridget, and "St. Catharine of Sienna." De Canoniz. Sanct. l. 2. c. 32. n. 11. The passage in St. Bridget's works relating to the Greeks, runs thus: "Be it known to the "Greeks, that their empire, and their kingdoms, or do- "minions, will never stand secure, nor in settled "peace; but that they will always be held in subjec- "tion by their enemies, from whom they will ever suf- "fer most grievous hardships and constant distresses, "until they shall have sincerely submitted themselves "with true humility and good will to the Church of "Rome and to her faith, conforming themselves en- "tirely to the holy ordinances and rites of that Church." Revel. lib. 7. c. 19.

How certain, and at the same time how terrible, are the judgments of God! *Who knoweth the power of thy anger: and for thy fear can number thy wrath?* Psalm.

89. v. 11. But we must acknowledge that *just and true are thy ways, O king of ages*, Apoc. xv. 3. The Babylonians and other pagan nations were the scourge of God's wrath upon the Jews. The barbarous nations of the North went forth, by virtue of a divine sentence, against idolatrous Rome and her empire, both which they demolished. We then see rise up, about the beginning of the seventh century, a new formidable power, that of the Mahometans, a people inspired by the devil with an implacable hatred to the Christian name. These seem to be designed by the Almighty to serve as his instrument for chastising his rebellious and bad subjects among the Christians through all succeeding times. They enslaved the eastern countries; and they have swallowed up the Constantinopolitan empire of the Greeks.——They will spread havoc and destruction through the Christian Church in the sixth age, as we have seen in the Apocalyptical account of that period of time.

V.

THE remarkable transactions that characterize the fifth age, are more generally known, as they stretch to our own times, and touch us more nearly. The reformation, first set on foot and propagated by Luther about the year 1520 or 1525, is the Epoch of the present age, the period of which to the pouring out of the Vial consists of three hundred years, of which two hundred and fifty are nearly elapsed.* Many have been the troubles, as we have seen, which the spirit of novelty occasioned in different parts of Christendom. The mischief which the Eastern part had sustained by the defection of the Greeks, was afterwards brought upon the Western by the Protestants. The Church of Christ sat bewailing the loss of a great number of her children; and she saw besides with unspeakable grief an endless train of disputes, dissentions, and animosities, the new heresies had given birth to. Several countries, particularly Germany, were subjected to great calamities, the conse-

* This work was printed in the year 1771.

quence of wars that were kindled by the same fire. Dreadful violences were committed, and severe persecutions followed, in which many suffered death for their adherence to the ancient faith. Indeed, what else could be expected, the work being carried on by the *angel of extermination?*

After the period of about one hundred and fifty years, by a special mercy of the Almighty, the severities exercised by the reformed against the Catholics began to abate, that spirit of animosity against the mother Church in some degree cooled; and at this day, though most of the former persecuting laws subsist, we have the comfort to see them less attended to, and not so strictly put in execution. All this was fully intimated, as we have seen, in the Apocalyptical account of this age. But though the persecutions be less rigorous in the present times, yet we cannot but lament to see the many temptations that lie in the way, to withdraw the weak, the tepid, the ambitious, and the covetous, from the right path, and engage them in an erroneous one that suits better their inclinations. Hence arises a deplorable spectacle to well-thinking persons, of so many that choose to sacrifice their religion to some worldly advantages that are offered them, or to some disorderly passions which they can by their apostacy more freely gratify.

The world was very sensible that Christ had established his Church fifteen hundred years before the existence of the Reformation, and that he had communicated his spirit to her, by which he had solemnly promised she should be guided through all ages. *I will ask the Father*, said Christ, *and he will give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever, the spirit of truth—And he will teach you all things*, John xiv. 16, 17, 26. The reforming teachers came therefore fifteen hundred years too late, and as they presumed to publish a doctrine contrary to what was taught in the Church, its novelty became its own condemnation. Nevertheless they were resolved to make it pass upon mankind for divine truth. But to effect this, they should have ascertained it by the intervention of mira-

culous works, in the same manner as the Apostles had originally established Christianity. "Let them prove," said Tertullian, speaking of the heretics of his own time, "Let them prove themselves to be new Apos-
"tles.....let them produce their miracles." L. de Præscrip. c. 30. But the reformers never were able to procure such a divine sanction.

To supply this defect, and to acquire credit to their new systems, what measures did they take? They employed an artifice, we are sorry to say it, suggested undoubtedly by that *Angel of the bottomless pit*, who was their governor and guide, namely, to indulge human nature, by gratifying the passions, by allowing such freedom and latitude in the practice of virtue, as religion had never admitted. They banished at once all those mortifications which distinguished the Christian religion, and were ordained by its author as the principal exercises to merit eternal life; such as fasting, abstinence, confession of sins, penance, &c. They pretended that all these practices were of no signification, that they were even intolerable encroachments on Christian liberty, and that faith alone sufficed for salvation. By these means they let loose the human passions, they enfranchised man from all constraint, and in fine they boasted of having smoothed the way to heaven. But, *thy silver is turned into dross: thy wine is mingled with water*, Isai. i. 22. For our Saviour had said: *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me*, Matt. xvi. 24. But, instead of the thorny way of self-denial and the cross, they opened a path strewed with roses. What wonder then, if so many took them for their guides, and espoused their maxims? Our Saviour again tells us, that *narrow is the gate, and strait is the way, that leadeth to life: and few there are that find it*, Matt. vii. 14. On the contrary, the new-gospellers inform us, that the way to heaven is broad and easy; and they offer to conduct us through it with little or no difficulty, because, say they, our Saviour took upon himself the load of hardships that should have been our portion, and has sustained them in our stead. But, *wo to them that sew cushions under*

every elbow: and make pillows for the heads of persons of every age to catch souls, Ezek. xiii. 18. Thus a survey of the doctrine and practical maxims of the reformers points out clearly to us the judgment we ought to pass upon their character, according to the criterion Christ has given us: *A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can an evil tree bring forth good fruit. Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them*, Matt. vii. 18, 20.

It would be a matter of surprise, that men nursed in the bosom of Christianity could adopt and teach such unchristian doctrines, if we did not see the source of it, which lies in the malign influence of their perfidious instructor, *Abaddon*. He laid open the way to introduce into their minds the most absurd tenets, by separating them first from that Church, *the pillar and ground of truth*, 1 Tim. iii. 15, which had been constituted the repository of genuine doctrine and morality. We cannot but lament that the perfidious prompter prevailed upon them to renounce the authority of that infallible guide, and to set up their own in its place; and thus he prepared them to receive his dictates, and to change the whole system of the Christian faith. But novelty in faith is an infallible mark of heresy. The doctrinal articles of Scripture are not to be interpreted by every man's private conceit, which would be infinitely various, but by the tradition derived from the Apostles, and perpetuated by their lawful successors. For as St. Vincent of Lerins observes: "It is the part of true Chris-"tian moderation, not to impose one's own opinions "upon posterity, but to adhere to what has been trans-"mitted to us by our predecessors." Comm. c. 9. The same is urged very strongly by Tertullian: "The "Apostles," says he, "published the faith to the Gen-"tiles, and constituted Churches in every city; from "which the other Churches derived the first principles "of faith and seeds of doctrine; and from which also "other Churches do daily derive in the same manner, "or they could not possibly be true Churches. For "this reason then they have the reputation of Aposto-"lic, because they are the offspring of Apostolic "Churches. For every kind must certainly be traced

" up to its original."....." And on this account every " other doctrine is to be deemed false and spurious " that is not conformable to the truth taught by these " Apostolic Churches." De Præscrip. c. 20, 21. And again: " What was first delivered, was the doc- " trine of our Lord and of truth; what is of later date " can be no other than the tenets of falsehood, mere fic- " tions. And this observation will stand firm and im- " moveable against all novel heresies, which labour un- " der the consciousness of not having this antiquity to " plead in their defence." Ibid. c. 31.

But the licentious spirit of forming new tenets of faith and new rules of life, in this fifth age, not only invaded and set aside the general authority of the Church of Christ, but in particular bent its virulence and rancour against the Church of Rome. The reason was plain: because the special province of that Church is, to oppose all innovations in faith, and to suppress, as far possible, the tares that spring up among the good corn. Such all antiquity had acknowledged to be the charge committed to that Church. To that Church, therefore, the reformers owed respect and obedience; to that Church, " the greatest," as St. Irenæus speaks, " the " most ancient and known to all, founded at Rome by " the two most glorious Apostles Peter and Paul, " which retains the tradition it received from them, " and which is derived through a succession of bishops " down to us. Showing which we confound all who, " any way out of self-conceit, love of applause, blind- " ness, or false persuasions, embrace what ought not to " be taught. For to this Church, of Rome, on account " of its more chief presidentship, it is necessary that " every Church, that is, the faithful every where, ad- " dress themselves." Lib. 3. contra Hæres. How happy might it have been for the reformers of these late times, if upon cool reflection they had applied to themselves what St. Optatus in the fourth century spoke to the Donatist heretics: " You cannot deny," said he, " that you know the Episcopal chair was first " given to Peter in the city of Rome, in which first sat " the head of the Apostles, Peter; which chair was

" one, that all others might preserve unity by the union " they had with it, and lest the other Apostles should " erect and defend chairs to themselves: so that now " he is a schismatic and an offender, who sets up an- " other against the only chair." Lib. 2.

We shall here add one general observation relative to the plan, which Christ seems to follow in the government of his kingdom on earth. Whenever he permits an enemy to wrest from him any part of his Church by heresy, schism, or infidelity, we see that at the same time he proceeds to conquer new countries by the preaching of the Gospel, and to incorporate them in his dominions. From the first foundation of his kingdom he *went forth conquering that he might conquer*, Apoc. vi. 2, which he continues to do through all ages. Thus the breaches made in his Church by the heresy of Arius and the Greek schism, he repaired by the conversion of new nations to the faith: as may be seen in ecclesiastical history. But never was this œconomy more remarkable than at the time of the rise of the reformation. For, about that period, the new great continent of America was discovered, and the Catholic faith carried thither, and diffused over vast countries of it. About the same time the Gospel was also announced to the distant people of the great empire of China with prodigious success; it was likewise carried into the kingdom of Japan, and into most of those immense tracts of land and the islands, comprised under the name of East-Indies, where the preaching of zealous ministers sent by the Apostolic See, converted multitudes of people, and thus greatly enlarged the dominions of Christ's kingdom. If then the late heresies, under the denomination of the reformed religion, have lopped off a considerable portion of country in Europe from the Catholic Church, the loss has been abundantly retrieved by the accession of much larger regions elsewhere that have embraced her communion.

In regard to the Vial of this age, we shall add nothing more, to what has been said of it in its place, than the following admonition. If the true servants of God, faithful members of the Catholic Church, observe that

towards fifty years from the present date*, the state of kingdoms and the course of public affairs seem to presage the approaching effusion of the fifth Vial, accordingly as we have intimated, then *go out from her, my people: that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues*, Apoc. xviii. 4, fly from the countries of wrath and perdition.

VI.

THE sixth age is the last of the Christian Church militant on earth. The time of its commencement cannot be ascertained, much less its final period, that is, the day of judgment, which, as our Saviour says, *no man knoweth, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father*, Mark xiii. 32. Among various sentiments touching the duration of this world, that seems to have prevailed most, which fixes its period at about six thousand years: but as all is uncertain with respect to this point, we shall not trouble the reader with any discussion about it. The Apocalyptical description of the sixth age paints it in colours, that leave no doubt it will be the most turbulent, the most calamitous, and most persecuting of all other ages. How alarming and how terrible will appear those extraordinary and unnatural signs in the sun, moon, and stars, the earthquakes, the enormous swellings and roarings of the sea, the bloody wars and battles, &c. Both our Saviour in the Gospel and St. John in the Apocalypse express sufficiently the impression these calamities will make on mankind, by saying, that *men will sink away for fear, and call upon the mountains to fall upon them and cover them.* How dreadful will be the destruction made by the terrible army of Antichrist! How cruel and bloody his persecution, which will last three years and a half! These shocking events, which throw confusion in the whole system of nature, will be certain presages of the approaching dissolution of the whole structure of the world. Happy those men, who shall take due warning from them, and shall consider them in a true light.

* Printed 1771.

And here we ought to acknowledge the particular favour Almighty God is pleased to grant us, in giving us previous notice of the disasters attending the sixth age, that we may prepare for them. And this duty is the more incumbent on us, since we touch so near that period, that the next generation, or next but one, will probably see some part of it. For after the fifth Vial is poured out, which we have shown will be done about fifty years hence *, we do not know how soon the commencement of the sixth age may follow. There even seem to appear already some indications of the approach of that period. For the Almighty, in his wisdom and mercy, before he pours down heavy disasters, generally sends lesser calamities by the way of admonition: and thus we see in these present times greater irregularities in the seasons of the year than used to be, more dearth and distress, earthquakes more frequent, &c. all which may be esteemed a prelude to those much more dreadful disasters of the next age. Who would not then judge it highly necessary, that parents should prevent their children of such unparalleled calamities that are to happen, and which it may be their lot to share in? They should be made acquainted with the principal transactions of the next age, as they are recorded in the Apocalypse. For disasters, when foreseen, generally make less impression. The pastors of the Church will probably think it expedient to inculcate the same to their flocks, because those who shall exist in the next age, ought to be prepared and fortified in a peculiar manner with a lively faith, with the love of God, and an ardent desire of their own salvation. Since many of them may be destined, by divine appointment, to pass through a most severe trial in the persecution of Antichrist, they cannot be too well grounded in the above-mentioned principles. The account we have from St. John and the prophet Daniel of that persecution, indicates, it will surpass in violence and cruelty all the persecutions of the first age of Christianity: what degree of fortitude therefore must be requisite to support the

* Printed 1771.

faithful on so trying an occasion? "The church now "admonishes you," says St. Cyril, "and announces to "you the things that relate to Antichrist before they "come to pass. Whether they will happen in our "time or later, we know not: but, as you are prevent- "ed of them, it is fit you should prepare yourself." Catech. 15.

Let the history of former persecutions be assiduously read, in order to acquire some idea of them, with which when the mind is familiarized, they will appear less terrible. Prepared by these means, and animated by the influx of divine grace, the faithful servants of God will hope to be able to undergo the same hardships and sufferings which the primitive Christians sustained, and of which we read in St Paul, the following description. *Some were racked,* says he,.....*Others had trials of mockeries and stripes, moreover also of bands and prisons. They were stoned, they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword, they wandered about in sheep-skins, in goat-skins, being in want, distressed, afflicted: of whom the world was not worthy: wandering in deserts, in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth,* Ep. to the Hebr. xi. 35, &c. Let especially a diligent and repeated perusal be made of the trials of the martyrs: that by viewing their invincible fortitude and constancy, the faithful may be inspired with the same spirit. They will see with what courage the primitive Christians appeared before the tribunals of the pagan judges, with what noble fortitude they answered to the questions put to them, with what unconcern they viewed the racks and other instruments, prepared for their torture, with what inflexibility they continued to profess their faith in the midst of torments, and with what resolution they bowed down their heads under the hand of the executioner. "We say we are Chris- "tians," says Tertullian, "and proclaim it to the whole "world; and under the hands of the executioner, and "in the midst of all the torments you inflict upon us, to "compel us to unsay it. Torn and mangled, and wel- "tering in our blood, we cry out as loud as we are able: "that we are worshippers of God through Christ."

Apol. c. 21. Those invincible heroes of antiquity, who thus sealed their faith with their blood, are the models we must set before our eyes, and which we must copy after. They had always in view that heavenly recompense which waited for them after their combat, and which infinitely surpassed whatever they could suffer in this world. They said to themselves, *the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us*, Rom. viii. 18. They recollected what our Saviour had said: *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer.....Be faithful until death: and I will give thee the crown of life*, Apoc. ii. 10. And again: *Blessed are ye when they shall revile you; and persecute you.....Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in Heaven*, Mat. v. 11, 12. This heavenly prospect animated their courage, and sweetened their torments. They had likewise before their eyes the divine pattern of their Lord and Saviour, who had trodden the same path before them for their encouragement. And what homage can be more acceptable to him, than to offer our lives to him who laid down his for our sake? "How beautiful a spectacle in the sight of God, "is a Christian entering the lists with affliction, and "with a noble constancy combating menaces, racks, "and tortures! when like a conqueror he triumphs "over the judge that condemns him. For he is cer- "tainly victorious who obtains what he fights for." Min. Fel. in Octav. Full of such thoughts and sentiments, and inspired with interior joy, those champions congratulated one another on the view of their approaching triumph, saying: "The persecutor wrests from "us our lands, but heaven is opened to us: the ene- "my of Christ threatens, but Christ protects us. They "put us to death, but we are crowned with immortali- "ty: by killing us, they deprive us of this world, but "paradise is offered us in its stead: our temporal life "is extinguished, but is changed into eternal." Cyprian. de exhort. mart. c. 12. Such ought to be the reflections of those who shall exist in the next age. The complexion of that period will be similar to that of the first age under the persecuting Roman emperors,

and will exceed it in violence and cruelty. The consideration therefore of the behaviour of the primitive Christians is the best preparation that can be recommended to their successors in the last age. Let them add to it another reflection, which should never be absent from their mind, namely, the immortal glory and happiness, which Christ expressly promises and describes as the portion of all those who shall sacrifice to him their lives in the persecution of Antichrist. *These are they who are come out of the great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God, and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne, shall dwell over them. They shall no more hunger or thirst, neither shall the sun fall on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall rule them, and shall lead them to the fountains of the waters of life, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes*, Apoc. vii. 14, &c.

Besides the reasons we have given above, the necessity of beginning to inculcate the preceding lessons to the present rising generation appears the more, when we consider the general decay of religion which now prevails. So little is the practice of morality attended to, so little even is religion thought of, that we see already no small progress made towards that *apostacy*, as St. Paul calls it, or towards that general defection from faith and that degeneracy of morals, which will take place before the great minister of Satan, Antichrist, appear. How swift indeed must be the decline of true faith, while free-thinking grows at such a pace? While every one seems to fix it as a principle, to believe nothing more than his reason comprehends, or that coincides with his own private humour? What practice of morality can we expect from people, who are immersed in worldly pleasures or in pursuits of private interest, who never spend a moment of thought about eternity, nor scarce ever address their God and Creator in a short prayer! And is not this the general course of life of the present generation of mankind? Certainly then, due care should be taken, to prevent as many of the

new rising race as possible, from being infected by this pestiferous corruption, and to prepare them to be enrolled in the list of the few elect of the approaching time. When a tide of irreligion and infidelity has broken in, and is seen to swell every day, what wonder if the period approach, when God will bring all to the test, and try them as metal in a fiery furnace, in order to discriminate between the good and the bad, and to separate the sound from the unsound grain? The few that will remain firm and staunch under all temptations and persecutions, will shine with great lustre in those days, when the bulk of mankind will suffer themselves to be seduced so far, as to go over to Antichrist, adore him as a God, and renounce their Creator, their religion, and their own conviction. Notwithstanding the great power of Antichrist, and his faculty of performing surprising wonders, the small body of the faithful will bear away the palm of victory, by their constancy in maintaining the cause of God at the expense of their lives, and by their fortitude in not yielding to promises, threats, or torments. And thus the fruit of their perseverance will be, to see their victory completed, and the cause of religion fully vindicated by the just judgments of God upon the impious, when he will exterminate in the most public and terrible manner, that satanic man, Antichrist, with his associates, and will extirpate idolatry from the earth, and restore peace to his Church.

To these reflections we shall add one remark, that of the six Vials of the wrath of God, hitherto considered, three, namely, the first, third, and sixth, are poured out for the punishment of idolaters, and the other three, viz. the second, fourth, and fifth, for the punishment of heretics.

VII.

THE seventh age is the last and longest of all. It is the age of eternity. We see it ushered in by the tremendous scene of the general judgment of mankind; of whom a part are admitted into the *heavenly Jerusalem* or everlasting bliss, and the other or greater part are doomed to suffer inexpressible torments for all

eternity in *the lake of fire and brimstone.* Whoever will take the pains to meditate a little on the great disparity of these two states, will certainly be moved, if he has not lost all sensibility, to use his utmost endeavours to gain the one and prevent his falling into the other. Both the happiness of the saved and the torments of the damned far surpass indeed our conceptions; but if they be even considered only in a general view, who would not shudder at the thought of being condemned to an eternal prison, to devouring flames that will never be extinguished? *Which of you can dwell with devouring fire? which of you shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* Isai. xxxiii. 14. And on the other hand, if we reflect on the possession of God, the source of all delight, joy, and felicity, with which we shall be filled according to the whole capacity of our being, and this without ever the least interruption or allay, are we not transported with the most vehement desire of attaining such a happy state? *They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of thy pleasure,* Psalm xxxv. 9. To this all-happy state let us then *by our good works make our election secure.* Let us spare no pains for it during the short period of our existence here. The recompense will infinitely exceed our labour, and the time of our labour bears no proportion to eternity.

CONCLUSION.

THUS have we seen the whole history of the Church of Christ, traced from her birth through her various difficulties and trials, through her persecutions from idolaters and convulsions by heresies; under all which she shone bright like the sun by the vigour of her faith and fortitude: nor was it in the power of hell and earth, though combined together, to crush her or hinder her growth. We have had a view of the admirable œconomy according to which Christ rules this

his Church, we have seen the special care with which he protects her, and with what severity he punishes those who dare injure her. By these means he makes her triumph over all her enemies, even in this world: and her victory will be finally crowned with that transcendent and ineffable glory to which she will be raised at that period when time shall be no more.

Hence it appears that, if to the history of the Apocalypse we add the books of the Old Testament, there rises a general history of the Church or people of God through the whole period of the existence of mankind. The book of Genesis gives us the creation of the first man; and his history, with that of the Patriarchs and Israelites, is related in that and the subsequent books of the Old Scriptures, with some short intervals of interruption, down to the birth of Christianity. Then begins the Apocalyptical account of the Christians, successors to the Jews; which carries on their history to the end of time, and even to their migration into the heavenly Jerusalem, where it places them in the unchangeable state of never-ending bliss.

Nothing further now remains but to request, that this present history may be received by the readers in that view for which it is intended, namely, for their instruction. They are now become sensible, we presume, of the utility of studying the Apocalypse. And what indeed can be more express on that head than the declaration of Christ himself, which we beg leave here to repeat: *Blessed is he that readeth and heareth the words of this Prophecy: and keepeth those things which are written in it*, Apoc. i. 3. And again: *Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the Prophecy of this book*, Apoc. xxii. 7. That this advice may be attended to is our sincere wish, and here we close the present work with the blessing delivered in the last verse of this admirable prophecy: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

In the preceding explanation the different parts of the Apocalypse having been related in a transposed order, we here subjoin the whole text by itself. And at the end of each verse the page is marked where that verse is explained; except with regard to the second and third chapters, which not appertaining to the general history of the Church, have not been explained.

THE

APOCALYPSE OF ST. JOHN

THE

APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST.

CHAPTER I.

THE Revelation of JESUS CHRIST, which God gave unto him, to make known to his servants the things which must shortly come to pass: and signified, sending by his Angel, to his servant John, See p. 1.

2 Who hath given testimony to the word of God, and the testimony of JESUS CHRIST, what things soever he hath seen. P. 1.

3 Blessed is he that readeth and heareth the words of this prophecy: and keepeth those things which are written in it. For the time is at hand. P. 3.

4 John to the seven Churches which are in Asia.

give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of my God.

8 And to the angel of the church of Smyrna write: These things saith the first and the last, who was dead, and is alive:

9 I know thy tribulation and thy poverty, but thou art rich: and thou art blasphemed by them that say they are Jews and are not, but are the synagogue of satan.

10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. Behold, the devil will cast some of you into prison that you may be tried: and you shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee the crown of life.

11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith to the Churches: He that shall overcome, shall not be hurt by the second death.

12 And to the angel of the church of Pergamus write: These things saith he, that hath the sharp two-edged sword:

13 I know where thou dwellest, where the seat of satan is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith. Even in those days *when* Antipas *was* my faithful witness, who was slain among you, where satan dwelleth.

14 But I have against thee a few things: because thou hast there, them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat, and commit fornication:

15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaites.

16 In like manner do penance: or else I will come to thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith to the Churches: to him that overcometh, I will give the hidden manna, and will give him a white counter, and in the counter a new name written, which no man knoweth, but he that receiveth it.

18 And to the Angel of the church of Thyatira write: These things saith the Son of God, who hath

his eyes like to a flame of fire, and his feet like to fine brass:

19 I know thy works, and thy faith, and thy charity, and thy ministry, and thy patience, and thy last works which are more than the former.

20 But I have against thee a few things: because thou sufferest the woman Jezabel, who calleth herself a prophetess, to teach, and to seduce my servants, to commit fornication, and to eat of things sacrificed to idols.

21 And I gave her a time that she might do penance, and she will not repent of her fornication.

22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed: and they that commit adultery with her, shall be in very great tribulation, except they do penance from their deeds:

23 And I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give to every one of you according to your works. But to you I say,

24 And to the rest who are at Thyatira: Whosoever have not this doctrine, and who have not known the depths of satan, as they say, I will not put upon you any other burden:

25 Yet that, which you have, hold fast till I come.

26 And he that shall overcome and keep my works unto the end, I will give him power over the nations,

27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and as the vessel of a potter they shall be broken,

28 As I also have received of my Father: and I will give him the morning star.

29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

CHAP. III.

AND to the Angel of the church of Sardis write: These things saith he, that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars: I know thy works, that thou hast the name of being alive: and thou art dead.

2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things that re-

main, which are ready to die. For I find not thy works full before my God.

3 Have in mind, therefore, in what manner thou hast received and heard: and observe, and do penance. If then thou shalt not watch; I will come to thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know at what hour I will come to thee.

4 But thou hast a few names in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments: and they shall walk with me in white, because they are worthy.

5 He that shall overcome, shall thus be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father, and before his Angels.

6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

7 And to the Angel of the church of Philadelphia write: These things saith the holy one and the true one, he that hath the key of David; he that openeth, and no man shutteth; shutteth, and no man openeth:

8 I know thy works. Behold, I have given before thee a door opened which no man can shut: because thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

9 Behold, I will bring them of the synagogue of satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie: Behold, I will make them to come and adore before thy feet: and they shall know that I have loved thee.

10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

11 Behold, I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

12 He that shall overcome, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God: and he shall go out no more: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and my new name.

13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

14 And to the Angel of the church of Laodicia write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, who is the beginning of the creation of God:

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16 But because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth.

17 Because thou sayest: I am rich, and made wealthy, and have need of nothing; and knowest not, that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold fire-tried, that thou mayest be made rich: and mayest be clothed in white garments, and that the shame of thy nakedness may not appear: and anoint thy eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.

19 Such as I love, I rebuke and chastise. Be zealous therefore and do penance.

20 Behold, I stand at the gate, and knock. If any man shall hear my voice, and open to me the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

21 To him that shall overcome, I will give to sit with me in my throne: as I also have overcome, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

CHAP. IV.

AFTER these things I looked, and behold a door *was* opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard, as it were of a trumpet speaking with me, said: Come up hither, and I will shew thee the things which must be done hereafter. P. 11.

2 And immediately I was in the spirit: and behold there was a throne set in heaven, and upon the throne one sitting. P. 11.

3 And he that sat was to the sight like the Jasper and the Sardine-stone: and there was a rain-bow round about the throne, in sight like unto an Emerald. P. 11.

4 And round about the throne were four and twenty seats; and upon the seats, four and twenty Ancients sitting, clothed in white garments, and on their heads *were* crowns of gold P. 12.

5 And from the throne proceeded lightnings, and voices, and thunders; and there were seven lamps burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God. P 12.

6 And in the sight of the throne was as it were a sea of glass like to crystal: and in the midst of the throne and round about the throne were four living creatures full of eyes before and behind. P. 12.

7 And the first living creature, was like a lion: and the second living creature, like a calf: and the third living creature, having the face, as it were, of a man: and the fourth living creature, was like an eagle flying. P. 12.

8 And the four living creatures had each of them six wings: and round about and within they are full of eyes. And they rested not day and night, saying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*, who was, and who is, and who is to come. P. 13.

9 And when those living creatures gave glory and honour and benediction to him, that sitteth on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, P. 14.

10 The four and twenty Ancients fell down before him that sitteth on the throne, and adored him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: P. 14.

11 Thou art worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honour and power: because thou hast created all things, and for thy will they were, and have been created. P. 14.

CHAP. V.

AND I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, a book written within and without, sealed with seven seals. P. 15.

2 And I saw a strong Angel, proclaiming with a loud voice: Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? P. 15.

3 And no man was able, neither in heaven, nor on earth, nor under the earth, to open the book, nor to look on it. P. 15.

4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open the book, nor to see it. P. 15.

5 And one of the Ancients said to me: Weep not; behold the lion of the tribe of Juda, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. P. 15.

6 And I saw: and behold in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the Ancients, a Lamb standing as it were slain, having seven horns and seven eyes: which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth. P. 16.

7 And he came, and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat on the throne. P. 16.

8 And when he had opened the book, the four living creatures, and the four and twenty Ancients fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints: P. 17.

9 And they sung a new canticle, saying: Thou art worthy, O Lord, to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: because thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God, in thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, P. 17.

10 And hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. P. 17.

11 And I beheld and heard the voice of many Angels round about the throne, and the living creatures and the Ancients: and the number of them was thousands of thousands, P. 18.

12 Saying, with a loud voice: the Lamb, that was slain, is worthy to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and benediction. P. 18.

13. And every creature, which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the

sea, and all that are in them: I heard all saying: To him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, benediction, and honour, and glory, and power, for ever and ever. P. 19.

14 And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the four and twenty Ancients fell down on their faces: and adored him that liveth for ever and ever. P. 19.

CHAP. VI.

AND I saw, that the Lamb had opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures, as it were the voice of thunder, saying, Come and see. P. 20.

2 And I saw: and behold a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow, and there was a crown given him, and he went forth conquering that he might conquer. P. 21.

3 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature, saying: Come and see. P. 70.

4 And there went out another horse, *that was* red: and to him that sat thereon, it was given that he should take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another, and a great sword was given to him. P. 70.

5 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature, saying: Come and see. And behold a black horse, and he that sat on him, had a pair of scales in his hand. P. 85.

6 And I heard as it were a voice in the midst of the four living creatures, saying: Two pounds of wheat for a penny, and thrice two pounds of barley for a penny, and see that thou hurt not the wine and the oil. P. 85.

7 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature, saying: Come and see. P. 124.

8 And behold a pale horse: and he that sat upon him, his name was death, and hell followed him. And power was given to him over the four parts of the earth,

to kill with sword, with famine, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. P. 124.

9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. P. 147.

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying: How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and revenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? P. 147.

11 And white robes were given to every one of them, one: and it was said to them, that they should rest yet for a little time, till their fellow-servants, and their brethren, who are to be slain, even as they, should be filled up. P. 147.

12 And I saw, when he had opened the sixth seal: and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair: and the whole moon became as blood: P. 210.

13 And the stars from heaven fell upon the earth, as the fig-tree casteth its green figs when it is shaken by a great wind: P. 210.

14 And the heaven departed as a book folded up: and every mountain, and the islands were moved out of their places. P. 210.

15 And the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the tribunes, and the rich, and the strong, and every bond-man, and every free-man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of mountains: P. 210.

16 And they say to the mountains and the rocks: Fall upon us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 210.

17 For the great day of their wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand? P. 210.

CHAP. VII.

AFTER these things I saw four Angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of

the earth, that they should not blow upon the earth, nor upon the sea, nor on any tree. P. 287.

2 And I saw another Angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the sign of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four Angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, P. 287.

3 Saying: Hurt not the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, till we sign the servants of our God in their foreheads. P. 287.

4 And I heard the number of them that were signed, an hundred forty four thousand were signed, of every tribe of the children of Israel. P. 288.

5 Of the tribe of Juda, *were* twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Ruben, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Gad, twelve thousand signed. P. 288.

6 Of the tribe of Aser, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Nephthali, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Manasses, twelve thousand signed. P. 289.

7 Of the tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Levi, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Issachar, twelve thousand signed. P. 289.

8 Of the tribe of Zabulon, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand signed. P. 289.

9 After this I saw a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues: standing before the throne, and in sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands: P. 319.

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying: Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb. P. 319.

11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the ancients, and the four living creatures: and they fell down before the throne upon their faces, and adored God, P. 320.

12 Saying, Amen. Benediction, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, honour, and power, and strength to our God for ever and ever. Amen. P. 320.

13 And one of the ancients answered, and said to me: These that are clothed in white robes, who are they? and whence came they? P. 320.

14 And I said to him: my Lord, thou knowest. And he said to me: These are they who are come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb. P. 320.

15 Therefore they are before the throne of God, and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne, shall dwell over them. P. 321.

16 They shall no more hunger nor thirst, neither shall the sun fall on them, nor any heat. P. 321.

17 For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall rule them, and shall lead them to the fountains of the waters of life, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. P. 321.

CHAP. VIII.

AND when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven, as it were for half an hour. P. 358.

2 And I saw seven angels standing in the presence of God: and there were given to them seven trumpets. P. 24.

3 And another angel came, and stood before the altar, having a golden censer: and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God. P. 25.

4 And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel. P. 25.

5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it on the earth, and there were thunders, and voices, and lightnings, and a great earthquake. P. 25.

6 And the seven angels, who had the seven trumpets, prepared themselves to sound the trumpet. P. 26.

7 And the first angel sounded the trumpet, and there

followed hail and fire, mingled with blood, and it was cast on the earth, and the third part of the earth was burnt up, and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. P. 27.

8 And the second angel sounded the trumpet: and as it were a great mountain burning with fire, was cast into the sea, and the third part of the sea became blood: P. 71.

9 And the third part of those creatures died, which had life in the sea, and the third part of the ships was destroyed. P. 71.

10 And the third angel sounded the trumpet: and a great star fell from heaven, burning as it were a torch, and it fell on the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters: P. 87.

11 And the name of the star is called wormwood. And the third part of the waters became wormwood: and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. P. 87.

12 And the fourth angel sounded the trumpet: and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars, so that the third part of them was darkened, and the day did not shine for a third part of it, and the night in like manner. P. 134.

13 And I beheld, and heard the voice of one eagle flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice: Wo, wo, wo, to the inhabitants of the earth: by reason of the rest of the voices of the three angels who are yet to sound the trumpet. P. 153.

CHAP. IX.

AND the fifth angel sounded the trumpet: and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth, and there was given to him the key of the bottomless pit. P. 153.

2 And he opened the bottomless pit: and the smoke of the pit arose as the smoke of a great furnace: and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke of the pit. P. 156.

3 And from the smoke of the pit there came out locusts upon the earth. P. 161. And power was given to them, as the scorpions of the earth have power: P. 164.

4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree: but only the men who have not the sign of God on their foreheads. P. 165.

5 And it was given unto them that they should not kill them; but that they should torment them five months: and their torment *was* as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man. P. 167.

6 And in those days men shall seek death, and shall not find it: and they shall desire to die, and death shall fly from them. P. 169.

7 And the shapes of the locusts, *were* like unto horses prepared for battle, P. 171: and on their heads *were* as it were crowns like gold, P. 183: and their faces *were* as the faces of men. P. 184.

8 And they had hair as the hair of women, P. 186: and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. P. 187.

9 And they had breast-plates as breast-plates of iron: And the noise of their wings *was* as the noise of chariots of many horses running to battle. P. 189.

10 And they had tails like to scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. P. 192. And they had over them

11 A king, the angel of the bottomless pit; whose name in Hebrew is *Abaddon*, and in Greek *Apollyon*, in Latin *Exterminans*, *(that is, destroyer.)* P. 195.

12 One wo is past, P. 203, and behold there come yet two woes more hereafter. P. 256.

13 And the sixth angel sounded the trumpet: and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before the eyes of God, P. 256.

14 Saying to the sixth angel, who had the trumpet: Loose the four angels, who are bound in the great river Euphrates. P. 258.

15 And the four angels were loosed, who were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year: for to kill the third part of men. P. 258.

16 And the number of the army of horsemen was twenty thousand times ten thousand. And I heard the number of them. P. 260.

17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision: and they that sat on them had breast-plates of fire, and of hyacinth, and of brimstone, and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions: and from their mouths proceeded fire, and smoke, and brimstone. P. 261.

18 And by these three plagues were slain the third part of men, by the fire and by the smoke and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. P. 263.

19 For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails. For, their tails are like to serpents, and have heads: and with them they hurt. P. 263.

20 And the rest of the men, who were not slain by these plagues, did not do penance from the works of their hands, that they should not adore devils and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: P. 318.

21 Neither did they penance from their murders, nor from their sorceries, nor from their fornication, nor from their thefts. P. 318.

CHAP. X.

AND I saw another mighty Angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rain-bow *was* on his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. P. 252.

2 And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth: P. 252.

3 And he cried with a loud voice as when a lion roareth. And when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. P. 253.

4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying to me: Seal up the things which the seven thunders have spoken, and write them not. P. 253.

5 And the Angel whom I saw standing upon the

sea and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven. P. 253.

6 And he swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things which are therein: and the earth, and the things which are in it: and the sea, and the things which are therein: That there should be time no longer: P. 253.

7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh Angel, when he shall begin to sound the trumpet, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared by his servants the prophets. P. 253.

8 And I heard a voice from heaven again speaking to me, saying: Go, and take the book that is open, from the hand of the Angel who standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. P. 254.

9 And I went to the Angel, saying unto him, that he should give me the book. And he said to me: Take the book, and eat it up: and it shall make thy belly bitter, but in thy mouth it shall be sweet as honey. P. 254.

10 And I took the book from the hand of the Angel, and eat it up: and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and when I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. P. 255.

11 And he said to me: Thou must prophesy again to many nations, and peoples, and tongues, and kings. P. 255.

CHAP. XI.

AND there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and it was said to me: Arise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that adore therein. P. 290.

2 But the court, which is without the temple, cast out, and measure it not: because it is given unto the Gentiles, and the holy city they shall tread under foot two and forty months: P. 290.

3 And I will give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. P. 244.

4 These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks that stand before the Lord of the earth. P. 244.

5 And if any man will hurt them, fire shall come out of their mouths, and shall devour their enemies. And if any man will hurt them, in this manner must he be slain. P. 244.

6 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and they have power over waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues as often as they will. P. 244.

7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast, that ascendeth out of the abyss, shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. P. 314.

8 And their bodies shall lie in the streets of the great city, which is called spiritually Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord also was crucified. P. 314.

9 And they of the tribes, and peoples, and tongues, and nations, shall see their bodies for three days and a half: and they shall not suffer their bodies to be laid in sepulchres. P. 315.

10 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry: and shall send gifts one to another, because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt upon the earth. P. 315.

11 And after three days and a half, the spirit of life from God entered into them. And they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them that saw them. P. 315.

12 And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying to them: Come up hither. And they went up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies saw them. P. 315.

13 And at that hour there was made a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell: and there were slain in the earthquake names of men seven thousand: and the rest were cast into a fear, and gave glory to the God of heaven. P. 315.

14 The second wo is past: and behold, the third wo will come quickly. P. 318.

15 And the seventh Angel sounded the trumpet:

and there were great voices in heaven, saying: The kingdom of this world is become our Lord's and his Christ's, and he shall reign for ever and ever: Amen. P. 359.

16 And the four and twenty Ancients, who sit on their seats in the sight of God, fell on their faces and adored God, P. 359.

17 Saying: We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, who art, and who wast, and who art to come: because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and thou hast reigned. P. 359.

18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest render reward to thy servants the prophets and the saints, and to them that fear thy name, little and great, and shouldest destroy them who have corrupted the earth. P. 359.

19 And the temple of God was opened in heaven: and the ark of his testament was seen in his temple, and there were lightnings, and voices, and an earthquake, and great hail. P. 359.

CHAP. XII.

AND a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars: P. 53.

2 And being with child, she cried travailing in birth, and was in pain to be delivered. P. 53.

3 And there was seen another sign in heaven, and behold a great red dragon having seven heads, and ten horns: and on his heads seven diadems: P. 54.

4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to be delivered; that, when she should be delivered, he might devour her son. P. 54.

5 And she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with an iron rod: and her son was taken up to God, and to his throne: P. 55.

6 And the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, that there they should feed her a thousand two hundred and sixty days. P. 56.

7 And there was a great battle in heaven, Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels: P. 56.

8 And they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. P. 57.

9 And that great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, who is called the devil and satan, who seduceth the whole world: and he was cast unto the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. P. 57.

10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying: Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: because the accuser of our brethren is cast forth, who accused them before our God day and night. P. 58.

11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death. P. 58.

12 Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you that dwell therein. Wo to the earth, and to the sea, because the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time. P. 58.

13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman, who brought forth the man-child: P. 59.

14 And there were given to the woman two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the desert unto her place, where she is nourished for a time and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. P. 59.

15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth after the woman, water as it were a river: that he might cause her to be carried away by the rivers. P. 60.

16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the river, which the dragon cast out of his mouth. P. 61.

17 And the dragon was angry against the woman: and went to make war with the rest of her seed, who

keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of JESUS Christ. P. 62.

18 And he stood upon the sand of the sea. P. 64.

CHAP. XIII.

AND I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy. P. 264.

2 And the beast which I saw, was like to a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his own strength, and great power. P. 264.

3 And I saw one of his heads as it were slain to death: and his death's wound was healed. And all the earth was in admiration after the beast. P 267.

4 And they adored the dragon, which gave power to the beast: and they adored the beast, saying: Who is like to the beast? And who shall be able to fight with him? P. 269.

5 And there was given to him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies: and power was given to him to do two and forty months. P. 278.

6 And he opened his mouth unto blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. P. 278.

7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them. And power was given him over every tribe, and people, and tongue, and nation. P. 280.

8 And all that dwell upon the earth adored him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb, which was slain from the beginning of the world. P. 280.

9 If any man have an ear, let him hear. P. 286.

10 He that shall lead into captivity, shall go into captivity: he that shall kill by the sword, must be killed by the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. P. 286.

11 And I saw another beast coming up out of the

earth, and he had two horns, like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. P. 281.

12 And he executed all the power of the former beast in his sight: and he caused the earth, and them that dwell therein, to adore the first beast, whose wound to death was healed. P. 282.

13 And he did great signs, so that he made also fire to come down from heaven unto the earth in the sight of men. P. 282.

14 And he seduced them that dwell on the earth, for the signs, which were given him to do in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they could make the image of the beast which had the wound by the sword, and lived. P. 282.

15 And it was given him to give life to the image of the beast, and that the image of the beast should speak: and should cause, that whosoever will not adore the image of the beast, should be slain. P. 283.

16 And he shall make all, both little and great, rich and poor, freemen and bondmen, to have a character in their right hand, or on their foreheads. P. 283.

17 And that no man might buy or sell, but he that hath the character, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. P. 283.

18 Here is wisdom. He that hath understanding, let him count the number of the beast. For it is the number of a man: and the number of him is six hundred sixty-six. P. 284.

CHAP. XIV.

AND I beheld, and lo a Lamb stood upon mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty four thousand having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads. P. 293.

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the noise of many waters, and as the voice of great thunder: and the voice which I heard, was as the voice of harpers harping on their harps. P. 293.

3 And they sung as it were a new canticle, before

the throne, and before the four living creatures, and the ancients; and no man could say the canticle, but those hundred forty four thousand, who were purchased from the earth. P. 293.

4 These are they who were not defiled with women: For they are virgins. These follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were purchased from among men, the first fruits to God and to the Lamb: P. 294.

5 And in their mouth there was found no lie: For they are without spot before the throne of God. P. 295.

6 And I saw another Angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the eternal Gospel, to preach unto them that sit upon the earth, and over every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people: P. 275.

7 Saying with a loud voice: Fear the Lord, and give him honour, because the hour of his judgment is come: and adore ye him that made heaven and earth, the sea, and the fountains of waters. P. 275.

8 And another Angel followed, saying: That great Babylon is fallen, is fallen: which made all nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. P. 335.

9 And the third Angel followed them, saying with a loud voice: If any man shall adore the beast and his image, and receive his character in his forehead, or in his hand; P. 340.

10 He also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mingled with pure wine in the cup of his wrath, and shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the sight of the holy Angels and in the sight of the Lamb. P. 340.

11 And the smoke of their torments shall ascend up for ever and ever: neither have they rest day nor night, who have adored the beast, and his image, and whosoever receiveth the character of his name. P. 340.

12 Here is the patience of the saints, who keep the commandments of God, and the faith of JESUS. P. 341.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven, saying to me: Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. From henceforth, now, saith the spirit, that they may

phets, and thou hast given them blood to drink: for they are worthy. P. 89.

7 And I heard another from the altar saying: Yea, O Lord God Almighty, true and just are thy judgments. P. 89.

8 And the fourth Angel poured out his vial upon the sun, and it was given unto him to afflict men with heat and fire: P. 143.

9 And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who hath power over these plagues, neither did they penance to give him glory. P. 143.

10 And the fifth Angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast: and his kingdom became dark, and they gnawed their tongues for pain: P. 205.

11 And they blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and wounds, and did not penance for their works. P. 205.

12. And the sixth Angel poured out his vial upon that great river Euphrates: and dried up the water thereof, that a way might be prepared for the kings from the rising of the sun. P. 257.

13 And I saw from the mouth of the dragon, and from the mouth of the beast, and from the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs. P. 313.

14 For they are the spirits of devils working signs, and they go forth unto the kings of the whole earth to gather them to battle against the great day of the Almighty God. P. 313.

15 Behold, I come as a thief: Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. P. 354.

16 And he shall gather them together into a place which in Hebrew is called *Armagedon*. P. 322.

17 And the seventh angel poured out his vial upon the air, and there came a great voice out of the temple from the throne, saying: It is done. P. 361.

18 And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and there was a great earthquake, such an one as never had been since men were upon the earth, such an earthquake, so great. P. 361.

19 And the great city was divided into three parts: and the cities of the Gentiles fell. And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the indignation of his wrath. P. 361.

23 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. P. 361.

21 And great hail like a talent came down from heaven upon men: and men blasphemed God for the plague of the hail: because it was exceeding great. P. 361.

CHAP. XVII.

AND there came one of the seven angels, who had the seven vials, and spoke with me, saying: Come, I will shew thee the condemnation of the great harlot, who sitteth upon many waters, P. 102.

2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication: and they who inhabit the earth, have been made drunk with the wine of her whoredom. P. 102.

3 And he took me away in spirit into the desert. And I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blashpemy, having seven heads and ten horns. P. 102.

4 And the woman was clothed round about with purple and scarlet, and gilt with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of the abomination and filthiness of her fornication. P. 102.

5 And on her forehead a name was written: a Mystery: Babylon the great, the mother of the fornications, and the abominations of the earth. P. 102.

6 And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of JESUS. And I wondered, when I had seen her, with great admiration. P. 102.

7 And the angel said to me: Why dost thou wonder? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast which carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. P. 103.

8 The beast, which thou sawest, was and is not, and shall come up out of the bottomless pit, and go into destruction: and the inhabitants on the earth, whose names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, shall wonder, seeing the beast that was and is not. P. 107.

9 And here is the understanding, that hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, upon which the woman sitteth, and they are seven kings. P. 108.

10 Five are fallen, one is, and the other is not yet come: and when he is come, he must remain a short time. P. 108.

11 And the beast which was and is not: the same also is the eighth and is of the seven, and goeth into destruction. P. 109.

12 And the ten horns which thou sawest, are ten kings, who have not yet received kingdom, but shall receive power as kings one hour after the beast. P. 110.

13 These have one design: and their strength and power they shall deliver to the beast. P. 110.

14 These shall fight with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, because he is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they that are with him are called, and elect, and faithful. P. 110.

15 And he said to me: The waters which thou sawest, where the harlot sitteth, are peoples, and nations, and tongues. P. 103.

16 And the ten horns, which thou sawest in the beast: these shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall burn her with fire. P. 112.

17 For God hath given into their hearts, to do that which pleaseth him: that they give their kingdom to the beast till the words of God be fulfilled. P. 113.

18 And the woman which thou sawest, is the great city, which hath kingdom over the kings of the earth. P. 103.

CHAP. XVIII.

AND after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power: and the earth was enlightened with his glory. P. 114.

2 And he cried out with a strong voice, saying: Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen: and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every unclean spirit, and the hold of every unclean and hateful bird: P. 114.

3 Because all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication: and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her: and the merchants of the earth have been made rich by the power of her delicacies. P. 114.

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying: Go out from her, my people: that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues. P. 116.

5 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and the Lord hath remembered her iniquities. P. 116.

6 Render to her as she hath also rendered to you: and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup wherein she hath mingled, mingle ye double unto her. P. 116.

7 As much as she hath glorified herself, and lived in delicacies, so much torment and sorrow give ye to her: because she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and sorrow I shall not see. P. 117.

8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be burnt with fire: because God is strong who shall judge her. P. 117.

9 And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication, and lived in delicacies with her, shall weep, and bewail themselves over her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning: P 118.

10 Standing afar off, for fear of her torments, saying: Alas! alas! that great city Babylon, that mighty city: for in one hour is thy judgment come. P. 118.

11 And the merchants of the earth shall weep, and mourn over her: for no man shall buy their merchandize any more: P. 118.

12 Merchandize of gold, and silver, and precious stones: and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine-wood, and all manner of vessels of ivory, and all manner of vessels of precious stones, and of brass, and of iron, and of marble, P. 118.

13 And cinnamon, and odours, and ointment, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. P. 118.

14 And the fruits of the desire of thy soul are departed from thee, and all fat and goodly things are perished from thee, and they shall find them no more at all. P. 119.

15 The merchants of these things who were made rich, shall stand afar off from her for fear of her torments, weeping and mourning, P. 119.

16 And saying: Alas! alas! that great city, which was clothed with fine linen and purple, and scarlet, and was gilt with gold, and precious stones, and pearls: P. 119.

17 For in one hour are so great riches come to nought, P. 119: and every ship-master, and all that sail into the lake, and mariners, and as many as work in the sea, stood afar off, P. 120.

18 And cried, seeing the place of her burning, saying: What city is like to this great city? P. 120.

19. And they cast dust upon their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, saying: Alas, alas, that great city, wherein all were made rich, that had ships at sea, by reason of her prices: for in one hour she is made desolate. P. 120.

20 Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets: for God hath judged your judgment on her. P. 120.

21 And a mighty angel took up a stone, as it were a great mill-stone, and cast it into the sea, saying: With such violence as this shall Babylon, that great city, be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. P. 336.

22 And the voice of harpers, and of musicians, and of them that play on the pipe and the trumpet, shall no more be found in thee: and no craftsman of any art whatsoever, shall be found any more at all in thee: and the sound of the mill shall be heard no more at all in thee: P. 337.

23 And the light of the lamp shall shine no more at all in thee: and the voice of the bridegroom and the bride, shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth, for all nations have been deceived by thy inchantments. P. 337.

24 And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth. P. 337.

CHAP. XIX.

AFTER these things I heard as it were the voice of much people in heaven, saying: *Alleluia.* Salvation, and glory, and power is to our God: P. 121.

2 For true and just are his judgments, who hath judged the great harlot, which corrupted the earth with her fornication, and hath revenged the blood of his servants, at her hands. P. 121.

3 And again they said, *Alleluia.* And her smoke ascendeth for ever and ever. P. 121.

4 And the four and twenty ancients, and the four living creatures, fell down and adored God that sitteth upon throne, saying: *Amen, Alleluia.* P. 121.

5 And a voice came out from the throne, saying: Give praise to our God, all ye his servants; and you that fear him, little and great. P. 121.

6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunders, saying, *Alleluia:* for the Lord our God the Almighty hath reigned. P. 338.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give glory to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath prepared herself. P. 372.

8 And it is granted to her that she should clothe her-

self with fine linen, glittering and white. For the fine linen are the justifications of saints. P. 373.

9 And he said to me: Write, Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. P. 416. And he saith to me: These words of God are true. P. 373.

10 And I fell down before his feet, to adore him. And he saith to me: See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Adore God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. P. 374.

11 And I saw heaven opened, and beheld a white horse: and he that sat upon him, was called faithful and true, and with justice doth he judge and fight. P. 326.

12 And his eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many diadems, and he had a name written, which no man knoweth but himself. P. 326.

13 And he was clothed with a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is called, THE WORD OF GOD. P. 326.

14 And the armies that are in heaven followed him on white horses, clothed in fine linen white and clean. P. 327.

15 And out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp two-edged sword: that with it he may strike the nations. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness of the wrath of God the Almighty. P. 327.

16 And he hath on his garment and on his thigh written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. P. 327.

17 And I saw an Angel standing in the sun, and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that did fly through the midst of heaven: Come, gather yourselves together to the great supper of God. P. 328.

18 That you may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of tribunes, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all free-men, and of bond-men, and of little, and of great. P. 328.

19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war with

him that sat upon the horse, and with his army. P. 328.

20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet, who wrought signs before him, wherewith he seduced them who received the character of the beast, and who adored his image. These two were cast alive into the pool of fire burning with brimstone. P. 329.

21 And the rest were slain by the sword of him that sitteth upon the horse, which proceedeth out of his mouth: and all the birds were filled with their flesh. P. 329.

CHAP. XX.

AND I saw an Angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. P. 64.

2 And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil and satan, and bound him for a thousand years. P. 64.

3 And he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him that he should no more seduce the nations, till the thousand years be finished. And after that he must be loosed a little time. P. 64.

4 And I saw seats: and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them, and the souls of them that were beheaded for the testimony of JESUS, and for the word of God, and who had not adored the beast nor his image, nor received his character on their foreheads, or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. P. 65.

5 The rest of the dead lived not, till the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. P. 66.

6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. In these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ: and shall reign with him a thousand years. P. 67.

7 And when the thousand years shall be finished, satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go forth, and seduce the nations, which are over the four quarters

of the earth, P. 259, Gog and Magog, and shall gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. P. 343.

8 And they came upon the breadth of the earth, and encompassed the camp of the saints, and the beloved city. P. 345.

9 And there came down fire from God out of heaven, and devoured them: P. 347: and the devil, who seduced, was cast into the pool of fire and brimstone, P. 350.

10 Where both the beast and the false prophet shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. P. 350.

11 And I saw a great white throne, and one sitting upon it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away, and there was no place found for them. P. 365.

12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing in the presence of the throne, and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged by those things which were written in the books, according to their works. P. 365.

13 And the sea gave up the dead that were in it: and death and hell gave up their dead that were in them: and they were judged every one according to their works. P. 366.

14 And hell and death were cast into the pool of fire. This is the second death. P. 368.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the pool of fire. P. 369.

CHAP. XXI.

AND I saw a new heaven and a new earth. For the first heaven and the first earth was gone, and the sea is now no more. P. 374.

2 And I John saw the holy city the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. P. 377.

3 And I heard a great voice from the throne saying: Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and he will

dwell with them. And they shall be his people: and God himself with them shall be their God. P. 377.

4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and death shall be no more; nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away. P. 377.

5 And he that sat on the throne, said: Behold, I make all things new. P. 377. And he said to me: Write, for these words are most faithful and true. P. 378.

6 And he said to me: It is done. I am Alpha and Omega: the beginning and the end. To him that thirsteth I wil give of the fountain of the water of life freely. P. 379.

7 He that shall overcome, shall possess these things: and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. P. 379.

8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, they shall have their portion in the pool burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. P. 379.

9 And there came one of the seven Angels, who had the vials full of the seven last plagues, and spoke with me, saying: Come, and I will shew thee the bride, the wife of the Lamb. P. 380.

10 And he took me up in spirit to a great and high mountain: and he shewed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, P. 380.

11 Having the glory of God: and the light thereof was like to a precious stone, as to the jasper-stone, even as crystal. P. 380.

12 And it had a wall great and high, having twelve gates, and in the gates twelve Angels, and names written thereon, which are names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. P. 381.

13 On the East, three gates: and on the North, three gates: and on the South, three gates: and on the West, three gates. P. 381.

14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them, the twelve names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb. P. 381.

15 And he that spoke with me, had a measure of a reed, of gold, to measure the city and the gates thereof, and the wall. P. 381.

16 And the city lieth in a four-square, and the length thereof is as great as the breadth: and he measured the city with a golden reed for the twelve thousand furlongs, and the length and the height and the breadth thereof are equal. P. 381.

17 And he measured the wall thereof an hundred forty four cubits, the measure of a man which is of an Angel. P. 381.

18 And the building of the wall thereof was of jasper-stone: but the city itself pure gold, like to clear glass. P. 382.

19 And the foundations of the wall of the city, were adorned with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper: the second, sapphire: the third, a chalcedony: the fourth, an emerald: P. 382.

20 The fifth, sardonix: the sixth, sarditus: the seventh, chrysolite: the eighth, beryl: the ninth, a topaz: the tenth, a chrysoprasus: the eleventh, a jacinct: the twelfth, an amethyst. P. 382.

21 And the twelve gates are twelve pearls, one to each: and every several gate was of one several pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. P. 383.

22 And I saw no temple therein. For the Lord God Almighty is the temple thereof, and the Lamb. P. 383.

23 And the city hath no need of the sun, nor of the moon, to shine in it. For the glory of God hath enlightened it, and the Lamb is the lamp thereof. P. 383.

24 And the nations shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honour into it. P. 383.

25 And the gates thereof shall not be shut by day: for there shall be no night there. P. 384.

26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. P. 384.

27 There shall not enter into it any thing defiled, or that worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they that are written in the book of life of the Lamb. P. 384.

CHAP. XXII.

AND he shewed me a river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. P. 384.

2 In the midst of the street thereof, and on both sides of the river, *was* the tree of life, bearing twelve fruits, yielding its fruits every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. P. 384.

3 And there shall be no curse any more: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him. P. 385.

4. And they shall see his face: and his name shall be on their foreheads. P. 385.

5 And night shall be no more: and they shall not need the light of the lamp, nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall enlighten them, and they shall reign for ever and ever. P. 385.

6 And he said to me: These words are most faithful and true. And the Lord God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his Angel to shew his servants the things which must be done shortly. P. 386.

7 And behold I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book. P. 388.

8 And I John, who have heard, and seen these things. And after I had heard and seen, I fell down to adore before the feet of the Angel, who had shewed me these things: P. 388.

9 And he said to me: See thou do not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them that keep the words of the prophecy of this book: Adore God. P. 388.

10 And he saith to me: Seal not the words of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. P. 389.

11 He that hurteth, let him hurt still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is just, let him be justified still: and he that is holy, let him be sanctified still. P. 389.

12 Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with

me, to render to every man according to his works. P. 389.

13 I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. P. 389.

14 Blessed are they that wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb: that they might have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city. P. 390.

15 Without are dogs, and sorcérers, and unchaste, and murderers, and servers of idols, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie. P. 390.

16 I Jesus have sent my angel, to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the root and stock of David, the bright and morning star. P. 390.

17 And the spirit and the bride say: Come. And he that heareth, let him say: Come. And he that thirsteth, let him come: and he that will, let him take the water of life freely. P. 391.

18 For I testify to every one that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book: If any man shall add to these things, God shall add unto him the plagues written in this book. P. 391.

19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from these things that are written in this book. P. 392.

20 He that giveth testimony of these things saith: Surely, I come quickly: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. P. 392.

21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. P. 418.

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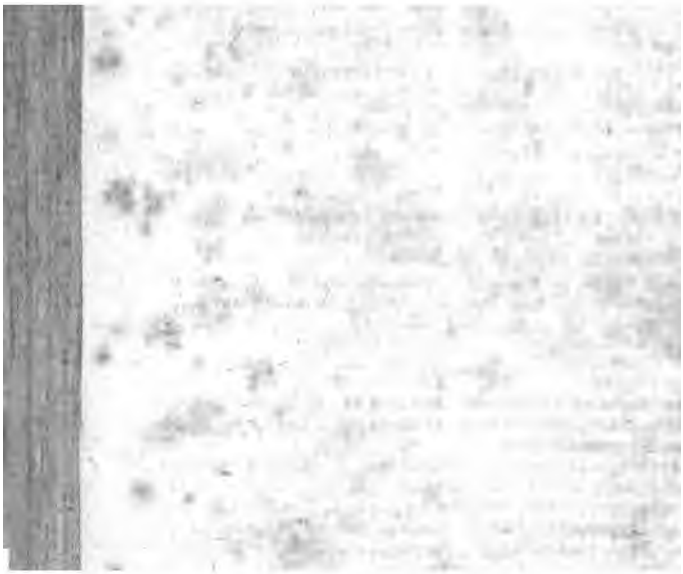

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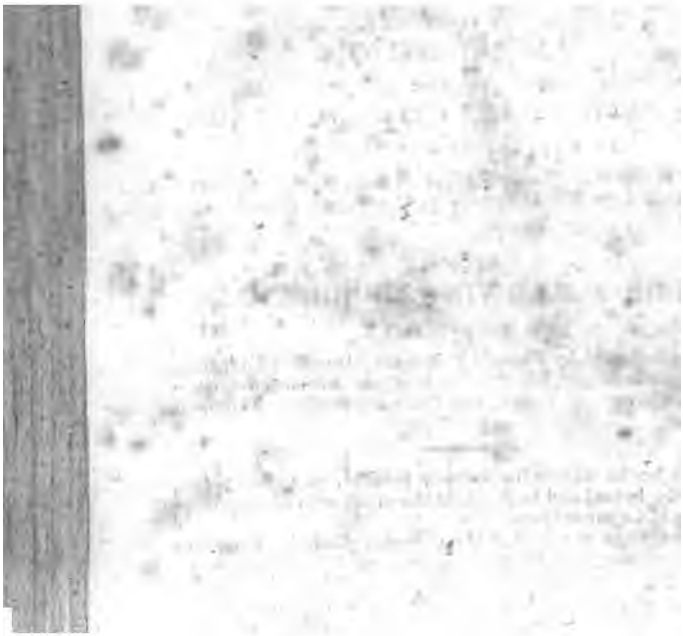

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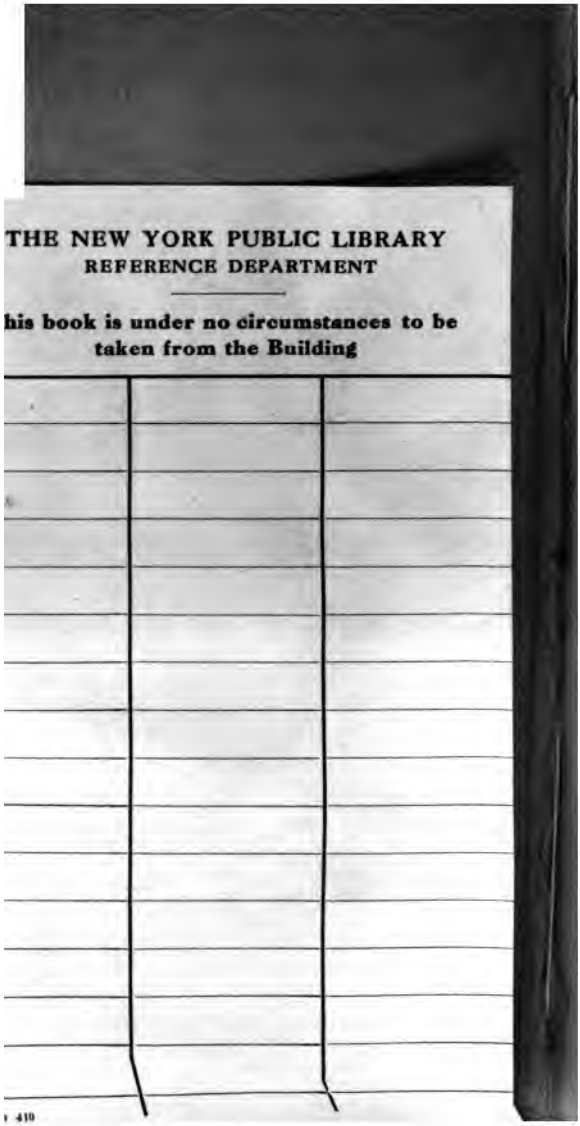
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